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ABSTRACT

This sixth volume in a series of seven is part of a larger study of parental involvement in four federal programs in selected school districts across the country. Presented here are the results of an intensive examination of projects funded under Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. Site studies of Title I projects yielded data on the five ways parents could participate in the programs--through governance, instruction, parent education, school support, and community-school relations. The researchers found that almost all parental involvement in project governance occurred through district and school advisory councils, though these councils had little involvement in project decision-making. Parent aides served at most projects and were well integrated into teaching activities in Title I classrooms. However, the aides did not participate in decision-making about instruction. Parent education and community relations activities were widespread. However, school support activities occurred infrequently and were not considered a major component of the program. The study concluded that high levels of parental involvement in Title I projects produced valuable outcomes, and that obstacles to such involvement could be overcome. (Author/WD)

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Parents and Federal Education Programs
Volume 6: Title I

EA 014 816

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The Study of Parental Involvement

PARENTS AND FEDERAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS

VOLUME 6: TITLE I

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We want to recognize, first of all, the contribution made by our former colleague, Hilda Borko to this phase of the study. Hilda played a major role in the design of the data collection and reporting system, the preparation of the analysis packets that guided the field work, and the training of the Field Researchers.

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PREFACE

Under the sponsorship of the U.S. Department of Education, System Development Corporation is conducting a multi-stage study of parental involvement in four federally funded programs: Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, the Emergency School Aid Act, Title VII of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, and Follow Through.

Parents may participate in several program functions: project governance, instruction of students, non-instructional support services, and school-community relations. In addition, projects sponsored by these programs may provide educational services for the parents themselves. The Study of Parental Involvement has been designed to obtain detailed descriptions of the nature and extent of activities involving parents, to identify factors that facilitate or inhibit the conduct of such activities, and to determine the direction and degree of the outcomes of these parental involvement activities. The objective of the study is to provide a description of parental involvement practices in each of the programs, highlighting those that succeed in fostering and supporting parental involvement activities.

An earlier report, "Parents and Federal Education Programs: Preliminary Findings from the Study of Parental Involvement," described the findings from a survey of nationally representative samples of districts and schools participating in these programs. It provides program-wide estimates of the extent of parental involvement with respect to certain formal characteristics of the functions mentioned above.

The present volume is one of seven which present the results of the next phase of the study. In this phase, a smaller number of selected sites was studied intensively to provide more detailed information on the causes and consequences of parental involvement activities. The volumes in this series are described below.

Volume 1 is a detailed summary of the findings from each of the subsequent volumes.

Volume 2 is a comparison of parental involvement activities across the four programs, contrasting the contributory factors and outcomes. Policy issues, such as the effect of parental involvement on the quality of education, the influence of regulations and guidelines, etc., are discussed from a multi-program perspective in this volume.

Volumes 3 to 6 describe and discuss in detail the findings for each of the four programs. Volume 3 is devoted to the ESAA program; Volume 4 is for the Title VII program; Volume 5 is for the Follow Through program; and Volume 6 is for the Title I program.

Volume 7, the last volume in the series, describes in detail the technical aspects of the study: the data collection methodologies for each phase, the instruments developed for the study, and the methods of data analysis employed. In addition, this volume provides a description of the data base that will become part of the public domain at the completion of the study.

The last product to be developed from the study will be a model handbook that will provide information for local project staff and interested parents about the practices that were effective in obtaining parental involvement in these Federal programs.

OVERVIEW AND SUMMARY

This report contains findings from the Study of Parental Involvement in Four Federal Education Programs pertaining to Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. The Study of Parental Involvement has been carried out by System Development Corporation (SDC) under a contract with the U.S. Department of Education (ED).

The Title I program provides "financial assistance...to local educational agencies serving areas with concentrations of children from low-income families...(to meet) the special educational needs of educationally deprived children." The Study of Parental Involvement was designed to accomplish five major goals with regard to Title I:

1. Describe parental involvement.
2. Identify factors that facilitate or inhibit parental involvement.
3. Determine the consequences of parental involvement.
4. Specify successful parental involvment practices.
5. Promulgate findings.

This report is one in a series that promulgates the findings of the study. It covers the first three goals in considerable detail. An earlier report (Parents and Federal Education Programs: Some Preliminary Findings from the Study of Parental Involvement) treated the first goal and part of the second in terms of data acquired from a nationally-representative sample of districts and schools, while the present report deals with in-depth informatin acquired from a purposeful sample of projects. Another report in the series (Involving Parents: A Handbook for Participation in Schools) contains information on the successful parental involvement practices that were uncovered during the study.

Data reported here were collected during the spring of 1980 at 16 school districts in the nation conducting Title I projects. The data were acquired by trained Field Researchers who lived in the communities and who spent four months seeking answers to research questions concerning parental involvment.

Data were obtained by Field Researchers through interviews, observations of events, and analyses of project documents, and were reported to the senior study staff. The latter, in turn, carried out analyses of data to detect patterns across projects.

During the time the data were being collected Title I projects were operating under regulations issued in 1976 to implement 1974 legislation. (In 1978 the legislation had been amended, but new regulations had not been issued when projects were studied.) The findings reported here are not to be construed as an audit of compliance with regulations, since there were very few specific statements in the legislation or regulations by which to assess the implementation of parental involvement components in projects. Further, the contract between SDC and ED called for a descriptive study rather than an evaluation of parental involvement.

SDC defined parental involvement in terms of five ways in which parents can participate in Title I projects. They are:

1. Governance--The participation of parents in the process of decision making for a project, particularly through advisory groups.

2. Instruction--The participation of parents in a project's instructional program as paid aides, instructional volunteers, and tutors of their own children.

3. Parent Education--Educational offerings by a project, intended to improve parents' skills and knowledge.

4. School Support--Project activities through which parents can provide non-instructional support to a school or a project.

5. Community-School Relations--Activities sponsored by a project to improve communication and interpersonal relations among parents and staff members.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN PROJECT GOVERNANCE

Examination of parental participation in project decision making revealed that very few parents took part in the process as individuals or through the medium of community or educational organizations not affiliated with Title I. Almost all parental involvement in project governance occurred through District Advisory Councils and School Advisory Councils (DACs and SACs). Regarding the nature of parental involvement in governance, SDC found the following:

- Almost every project had an operational DAC, and invariably the majority of DAC members were parents.

- There was little involvement of DACs in project decision making.

- Four patterns of DAC participation in decision making emerged: an instance in which a DAC did not exist; DACs that operated only to receive information about the project; DACs that had token involvement and rubber stamped project personnel decisions; and DACs where there was true involvement in that advice offered by parents had an impact on ultimate decisions.

- There were differences between DACs in larger and smaller communities. There was a strong tendency for the more involved DACs to be located in the larger cities.

- Few SACs were actively involved with the making of decisions about a school's Title I project activities.

- There were six levels of SACs identifiable, ranging from locations at which no SAC existed to examples of SACs that had critical involvement with important decisions.

With respect to the factors that influenced the participation of advisory councils in decision making, the variables described below were found.

- Those District Advisory Councils that had a major role in project decisions had the following attributes: they were in states that had specific Title I guidelines that were implemented and monitored; they were affiliated with Title I projects that offered a clear authority role to the DAC; they were in projects where there was a Parent Coordinator who supported but did not dominate the DAC; the DAC had received training in how to function as a group; and power in the council resided in a parent.

- The least active District Advisory Councils were characterized by these dimensions: their states had no Title I guidelines; the DAC had no specified authority; there was no Parent Coordinator; the staff additude was that parents should only provide support for the project and its schools; the parental attitude was that the project was being carried out satisfactorily and/or parents should leave decisions to professionals; DACs either received no training or only training to acquaint them with Title I; and, the most powerful person was a professional.

- The most active School Advisory Councils occurred where there was an environment within the district inclined toward parent activism, and a key individual at the school took a leadership position to bring about an active SAC.

Information related to outcomes of advisory councils revealed that parent members frequently reported achieving personal growth because of their participation, and had developed better understandings of Title I and the local project. While there were few highly involved DACs and SACs, those that were managed to make meaningful contributions to the design and implementation of Title I projects.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN PROJECT INSTRUCTION

Information about the participation of parents as paid aides, instructional volunteers, and tutors of their own children revealed that no project had a formal mechanism for instructional volunteers, and only two projects had systematic home tutoring programs (although there were numerous instances of activities leading to parents providing informal assistance with schoolwork). Accordingly, attention was focused on parents as paid aides. With regard to the nature of this activity, SDC found that:

- Parents were serving as paid aides at most projects.
- There were few instances of formal policies to hire parents as aides, and neither Parent Coordinators nor School Advisory Councils were active in the aide component of projects.
- Parent aides were an integral part of teaching in Title I classrooms.
- Parent aides had no input into decisions about projectwide or schoolwide instruction, and in a few cases were included in decisions about classroom instruction.

The major factor contributing to the absence of instructional volunteers in Title I projects was the presence of volunteer programs under other auspices. Few formal home tutoring programs were found because, respondents reported, they were not considered when the project was designed. With regard to factors influencing parents as paid aides, the following was found:

- Parents were employed as aides through informal practices. They were recruited because they were known to school personnel, and hired by principals who preferred someone who was familiar.
- Parents serving as paid aides was not considered parental involvement because there was no mandate for it. Further, most parents who were

aides had held the position for many years and no longer had children participating in the Title I project.

- Parent aides were given meaningful instructional tasks because teachers felt they could lighten the teaching load and provide more individual attention to students.

- Attitudes of parents and teachers affected parental participation in decisions about instruction. Parents sometimes felt this was unnecessary, or that they were not qualified; professionals sometimes felt they should make all such decisions.

It was reported that students developed better attitudes toward their work when their parents were involved with the school's instructional program. In the two projects where systematic home tutoring occurred a similar outcome emerged, along with evidence of improved student achievement. Parents who were active, as aides or as home tutors, reported having a better understanding of the project and becoming more supportive of it.

OTHER FORMS OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Findings related to parent education, school support, and community-school relations are treated together in this report. With respect to activities it was found that:

- Most projects offered some form of parent education, including parenting skills and assisting children with classwork.

- School support activities, sponsored by the Title I project, took place infrequently and were not a major activity where they occurred.

- Virtually all projects engaged in community-school relations activities, primarily communication and seldom with interpersonal relations.

- Some Title I projects, and districts, tended to treat these three forms of parental involvement comprehensively, with interrelated activities.

Factors that contributed to the activity findings are as follows.

- Higher levels of parent education were associated with an attitude on the part of project personnel that parents were more effective participants if they acquired information and skills, and with the presence of a Parent Coordinator. Projects with lower levels lacked Parent Coordinators, and staff members felt that parental involvement was unimportant.

- Little school support took place either because there was no great interest in it, or there were non-Title I mechanisms for such parental participation.

- Communication from the project to parents seemed to be associated with the belief, on the part of parents and staff, that it was necessary, and with a social pattern in the community of interaction between the school and parents.

The outcomes associated with these forms of parental involvement were that parents reported heightened levels of awareness and increased positive feelings about the Title I project, while principals and teachers stated that they had developed more positive relations with children with whose parents they communicated.

ADDITIONAL POLICY ISSUES

Beyond the policy implications regarding governance and instruction (already cited), three other policy issues were addressed. Findings and implications were:

- It was not possible to obtain accurate data on expenditures for parental involvement; consequently, costs could not be determined. The conclusion was that the Title I office in ED should define what is and is not to be treated as parental involvement, specify legitimate Title I expenditures for parental involvement, and develop a standardized reporting form for parental involvement.

- Parents did not influence the design, impolementation, and evaluation of Title I projects to any appreciable degree. They provided little support to Title I projects, and had modest impacts on the climate of project schools. The conclusions were that the Title I office, SEAs, and LEAs should specify a meaningful role for advisory councils in project planning and evaluating, and should give parent aides, volunteers, and home tutors a voice in decisions about project instructional services. Title I projects should carry out activities whereby parents can augment project services and have frequent two-way communication and interaction with project personnel.

- While most districts were carrying out numerous Federal projects calling for parental involvement, there was little interaction among them. No effect could be detected of such multiple funding, and it was not possible to draw conclusions about the value of, for instance, forming a single advisory group to serve all Federal projects simultaneously.

SOME GENERALIZATIONS

On the basis of all its findings, SDC formed these generalizations about parental involvement in Title I projects.

- Parental involvement was highly variable from one project to another. There were projects at which it was not possible to find any participation of parents, and projects where parents took an active part in all types of activities.

- High levels of parental involvement produced valuable outcomes. At projects with the highest degrees of parental participation respondents reported benefits to parents, to projects and schools, to staff members, and to students, along with few reports of negative outcomes.

- While there were obstacles to achieving extensive parental involvement, those obstacles could be overcome. Powerful contributory factors that impacted on many dimensions of parental participation were dealt with successfully by some projects and brought about a higher degree of that participation.

CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

The Study of Parental Involvement in Federal Educational Programs was designed to provide a systematic exploration of parental participation in four programs sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education. The Study consists of two substudies: the Federal Programs Survey and the Site Study. A previous document reported the findings from the Federal Programs Survey, while this volume is devoted to that portion of the Site Study relating to the Title I program.

This chapter gives the reader a brief orientation to the Site Study. Elaborations on the themes addressed herein are provided in the Appendix.

I. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

In the last two decades parental participation has come to play an increasingly important, and different, role in education. The concept of parental involvement in Federal educational programs had its roots in the Community Action Program of the 1964 Economic Opportunity Act (EOA). One intent of the EOA was to promote community action to increase the political participation of previously excluded citizens, particularly members of ethnic minority groups, and to provide them with a role in the formation of policies and decisions that affect their lives. Specifically, the EOA required that poverty programs be developed with the "maximum feasible participation of the residents of areas and the members of the groups served."

This maximum feasible participation requirement has had broad interpretation in education. Head Start, the first EOA education program to attempt intensive parental participation, requires local projects to include parents on policy-making councils. Head Start parents also can become involved as paid staff members in Head Start centers, and as teachers of their own children at home.

Other Federal educational programs have tended to follow the Head Start lead in identifying both decision-making and direct service roles for parents. Participation by parents in Federal programs was stipulated in the General Education Provisions Act, which calls for regulations encouraging parental participation in any programs for which it is determined that such participation would increase program effectiveness.

The Study of Parental Involvement was designed to examine parental involvement components of four Federal programs: ESEA Title I, ESEA Title VII Bilingual, Emergency School Aid Act (ESAA), and Follow Through. All derive their emphasis on parental and community participation from the General Education Provisions Act, but there are differences in legislation, regulations, and guidelines among the four programs. These differences--in intent, target population, and parental involvement requirements--make the programs a

particularly rich source for insights into the nature and extent of parental participation in Federal educational programs.

The present study takes on added significance in light of the paucity of prior research into the nature of parental involvement. Despite increasing programmatic emphasis on parental participation, little systematic information is available on the activities in which parents engage, the reasons such activities take place, and the results of the activities.

II. PURPOSES FOR THE STUDY

Given the lack of information on parental involvement in Federal education programs, the Education Department in 1978 issued a Request for Proposal for a study to achieve two broad goals: (1) obtain accurate descriptions of the form and extent of parental involvement and, for each form or participation role, identify factors that seem to facilitate or prevent parents from carrying out the role; and (2) investigate the feasibility of disseminating information about effective parental involvement.

In response, System Development Corporation (SDC) proposed a study with these major objectives:

1. Describe Parental Involvement: provide detailed descriptions of the types and levels of parental involvement activities, characteristics of participants and non-participants, and costs.

2. Identify Contributory Factors: identify factors that facilitate or inhibit parental involvement activities.

3. Determine Consequences: determine the direction and degree of outcomes of parental involvement activities.

4. Specify Successful Strategies: document those practices that have been effective in enhancing parental involvement.

5. Promulgate Findings: produce reports and handbooks on parental involvement for project personnel, program administrators, and Congress.

III. OVERALL STUDY DESIGN

To meet the objectives outlined above, SDC designed the work as a series of substudies. First, the Federal Programs Survey was developed to collect quantitative data on formal parental involvement activities from a sample of districts representative of each program on a nationwide basis. Second, the Site Study was created to explore in an in-depth fashion the contributory factors and consequences of parental involvement, as well as the more informal activities.

The Federal Programs Survey had two broad purposes. The first was to provide nationwide projections of the nature and extent of formal parental involvement activities. (See Parents and Federal Education Programs: Some Preliminary Findings from the Study of Parental Involvement.) The second was to provide information needed to establish meaningful purposive samples for the Site Study. On the other hand, the Site Study was planned to allow for detailed investigations of projects that had particular characteristics as determined in the Survey, notably projects that appeared to have greater and lesser degrees of parental participation.

During the planning period of the Study a conceptual framework for parental involvement was developed, along with the specification of a series of policy-relevant issues. The conceptualization, depicted on the following page, can be summarized in this statement:

> Given that certain preconditions are satisfied, parental involvement functions are implemented in varying ways, depending upon particular contextual factors, and they produce certain outcomes.

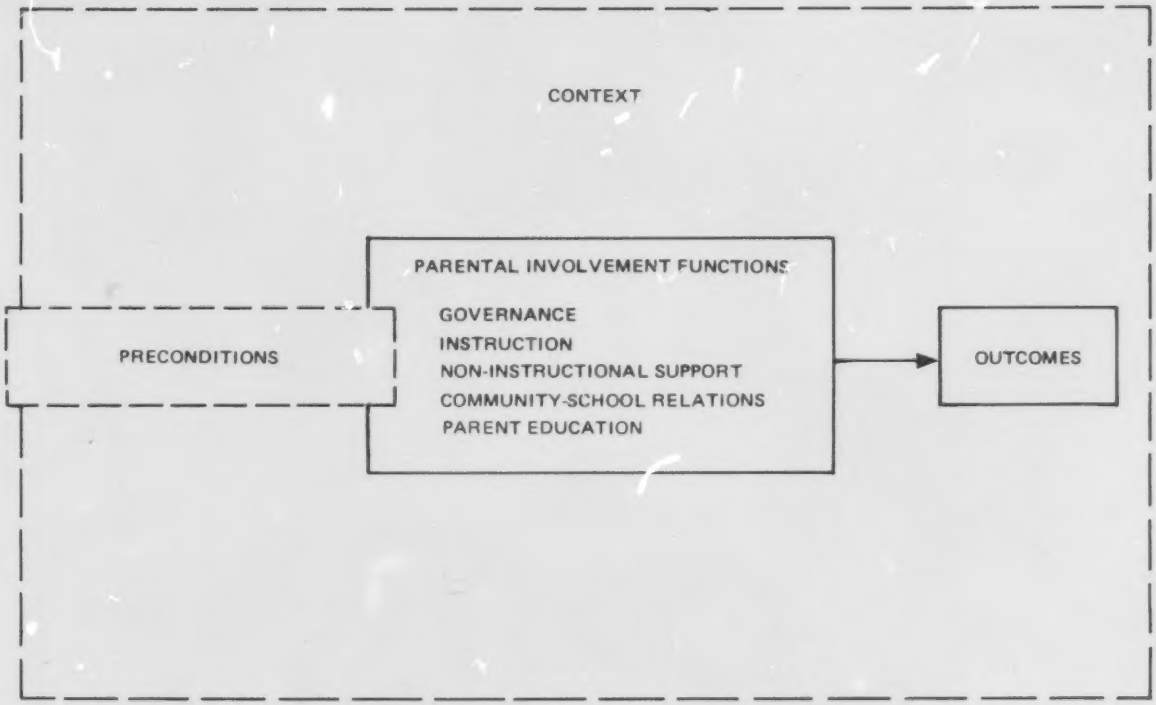

Figure 1-1. Diagram Representing the Conceptual Framework for the Study of Parent Involvement

These five functions form the definition of parental involvement used in the Study:

- parental participation in project governance
- parental participation in project instructional services
- parental participation in non-instructional (school) support services
- communication and interpersonal relations among parents and educators
- educational offerings for parents

Policy-relevant issues were specified in five areas on the basis of interviews with Congressional staff members, Federal program officials, project personnel, and parents. They are presented in the figure that follows.

IV. SITE STUDY METHODOLOGY

Since this volume contains the results of the Site Study, a brief description of that substudy's methodology is presented here. The time period involved is the 1979-80 school year; actual data collection took place from January through May, 1980.

Samples for the Site Study were drawn independently for each program, with a goal of selecting projects that reported greater and lesser degrees of parental involvement for the Federal Programs Survey. Districts were selected first, then two schools within each district. At the close of data collection, the total sample was 57 sites, constituted as follows: Title I=16, Follow Through=16, Title VII=13, and ESAA=12.

The purposes for the Site Study demanded an intensive, on-site data collection effort employing a variety of data sources and substantial time. This was met by hiring and training experienced researchers who lived in the vicinity of each site. They collected data for a period of at least 16 weeks, on a half time basis.

1. Parental Involvement in Governance

   - Do existing Federal and state legislation, regulations, and guidelines allow parents to participate in making important decisions?
   - Do existing state and local practices affect parental participation in the making of important decisions?

2. Parental Involvement in the Instructional Process

   - Do existing Federal and state legislation, regulations, and guidelines allow parents to participate meaningfully in instructional roles?
   - Do existing state and local practices affect meaningful parental participation in instructional roles?

3. Funding Considerations and Parental Involvement

   - Do total funding levels affect the quantity and quality of parental involvement activities?
   - Do the timing and duration of fund allocations influence the quantity and quality of parental involvement activities?
   - Does the amount of funding specifically devoted to parental involvement affect the quantity and quality of parental involvement activities?

4. Parental Involvement and Educational Quality

   - Do parental involvement activities influence the quality of education provided to students served by the four Federal programs?

5. Multiple Funding and Parental Involvement

   - When multiple programs are funded at a site, are the quantity and quality of parental involvement activities affected?

Figure 1-2. Policy Relevant Issues for the Study of Parental Involvement

Three techniques were used by Field Researchers: interviews, observations, and document analyses. Their efforts were guided by analysis packets that contained details on research questions to answer and techniques to employ. Each Field Researcher worked closely with an SDC Site Coordinator, who provided guidance and assistance. Information was submitted to SDC on a regular basis by means of tape-recorded protocols and written forms. Toward the end of their work, Field Researchers prepared summary protocols in which they analyzed all data for their own site; these summary protocols became the first step in the analysis process.

Following the receipt of summary protocols, senior SDC staff summarized the findings from each site into syntheses that followed a common outline. The syntheses were further distilled into analysis tables that displayed data in matrices, which were examined for cross-site patterns. Versions of analysis tables appear in subsequent chapters, along with the major findings regarding the research questions guiding the study.

V. INTRODUCTION TO THE VOLUME

The remainder of this report is organized as follows. First is a treatment of the Federal program, then a description of the sample, followed by a chapter on the coordination of parental involvement. Chapters thereafter take up the five functional areas in turn. The final chapter addresses the policy-relevant issues.

Chapters dealing with the five functional areas are structured around the basic study objectives. That is, they contain findings on parental involvement activities for a functional area, along with the contributory factors and consequences for the activities. Throughout those chapters findings are presented in two ways: total information is displayed in tables, while major findings are highlighted in the text.

Recognizing the need for maintaining the confidentiality of participants in the study, pseudonyms have been used to identify districts and schools. In addition, the common titles of Project Director and Parent Coordinator are used although projects actually called those persons by many other names.

CHAPTER 2
THE TITLE I PROGRAM

In terms of both children served and funds allocated, Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 is the largest of the four programs in this study. Its purpose is described in Section 101 of the legislation, as follows:

> In recognition of the special needs of the children of low-income families and the impact that concentrations of low-income families have on the ability of local educational agencies to support adequate educational programs, the Congress hereby declares it to be the policy of the United States to provide financial assistance...to local educational agencies serving areas with concentrations of children from low-income families to expand and improve their educational programs by various means...which contribute particularly to meeting the special needs of educationally deprived children.

In implementing this policy, the U.S. Education Department makes grants to eligible LEAs to conduct projects designed to improve the quality of instruction for children who are underachieving.

Title I is a categorical entitlement program, meaning that certain students are entitled to receive its services. Its target population is composed of students who are educationally deprived and who reside in areas with high concentrations of low-income families. Its goal is to meet student needs and to raise student achievement, especially in the areas of reading, language arts, and mathematics. Projects are carried out at either the school level or the LEA level. Typically, services to students consist of one-to-one or small group instruction in reading and/or mathematics. Specially trained teachers generally provide students with instruction in their regular classrooms, in reading or math labs on a pull-out basis, or occasionally after school. The Title I teachers frequently are assisted by paid paraprofessionals.

Title I funds are distributed to state education agencies which, in turn, distribute them to local education agencies. Although LEAs allocate dollar amounts to individual schools, schools generally neither receive the funds directly nor administer them. At present, 93.7 percent of the nation's districts receive Title I funds, and 67 percent of elementary schools are allocated Title I funds. This program is truly national in scope, affecting every state, almost every LEA, and the majority of schools.

The original legislation required that parents be involved in developing local project applications. Subsequently, regulations and guidelines were issued to clarify this criterion. In July, 1968, advisory committees were suggested; in November, 1968, "maximum practical involvement" of parents in all phases of Title I was required. In 1971, local educational agencies were required to provide parents with documents on planning, operating, and evaluating projects. In 1971, a Parent Advisory Council was required at the district level; in 1974, the law was changed to include councils at both the district and school levels, with members selected by parents. The most recent legislation, in

1978, describes in detail the composition and training of Parent Advisory Councils at both levels.

The conceptualization developed for the Study of Parental Involvement contains five functional areas--avenues through which parents can participate in federal educational programs. These five functions are described below, as they apply to Title I projects.

Governance Function. This function refers to parental participation in the decision-making process. Parents can participate in the governance of Title I projects in the following ways:

1. As members of the mandated District Advisory Council.
2. As members of the mandated School Advisory Council.
3. Informally, as individuals or as members of organizations.

Education Function. This function refers to parental participation in the instructional process. Parents can participate in the educational component of Title I projects as paid aides (paraprofessionals) and volunteers, and as teachers of their own children in the home. Aides and volunteers can be used in Title I projects to help individual students and groups of students to master academic skills and to prepare materials for academic instruction. In Title I projects parents can tutor their own children at home to help students acquire academic skills.

School Support Function. This function refers to parental augmentation of the school's resources. Parents can augment a Title I school's resources by volunteering to act as speakers in classrooms and at assemblies, demonstrating particular skills to students, improving buildings and grounds, locating or making non-instructional materials, and raising funds. As either volunteers or paid aides, parents can supervise students in the playground and during field trips. Parents may assist the professional staff in dealing with such

matters as the closure of a school, the reassignment of key personnel, and the passage of school finance issues. Parents can provide encouragement to their own children.

Community-School Relations Function. This function refers to parent-school exchanges of information and the development of improved interpersonal relations. Parents in a Title I school can take part in this function as participants in communication by way of written and verbal (telephone) messages, informational meetings, and face-to-face dialogues, and through formal and social interchanges involving the school staff and parents.

Parent Education Function. This function refers to the training provided to parents to assist them in areas where there are student needs. Parents in Title I schools can receive training through workshops offered by local projects. Parent education programs include such topics as child growth and development, parent-child relations, health and nutrition, and leadership development.

CHAPTER 3
ORGANIZATION OF TITLE I PROJECTS

I. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is threefold: to acquaint the reader with the environment in which the 16 Title I projects in the Site Study existed; to describe the structure of those 16 projects; and to present information on the funding of the 16 projects. The chapter is divided into two additional sections, one for project environment and structure, the second for project funding.

II. PROJECT CONTEXT AND STRUCTURE

The variables discussed below were chosen for study because, based on our literature review and our experience with different Federal educational programs, we felt that they might contribute to an understanding of parental involvement in Title I projects. We thought that these variables might help explain the manner and extent to which parental involvement activities were carried out; the degree to which our expectations were realized will be developed in subsequent chapters.

The variables treated below, summarized across all 16 sites, are presented for individual sites in the Capsule Summaries that appear at the end of this chapter. As is the case in the Capsule Summaries, we have organized the variables under four major divisions: community, district, school, and project. The Federal Programs Survey provided basic information for many variables, but the Survey data were verified and augmented during the collection of Site Study data.

COMMUNITY CHARACTERISTICS

The 16 Title I projects participating in the Site Study were located in communities that represented a fairly wide range of characteristics. They were geographically distributed throughout the United States with the exception that none was located in the Northwest.

Location	Number of Districts	Percentage of Sample
Northeast	2	13
Southeast	4	25
Midwest	5	31
Southwest	5	31
Northwest	0	0

The size of the community ranged from a dot on the map to some of the nation's largest cities.

Nature	Number of Districts	Percentage of Sample
Large city, over 200,000 population	4	25
Suburb of a city	3	19
Middle-size city, 50,000-200,000 population	2	13
Small city or town, less than 50,000 population	5	31
Rural area	2	13

Although one site was virtually 100 percent White, the ethnic composition of the communities in which the sample schools were situated was mixed to varying degrees. A combination of Blacks, Hispanics, Asians, and Native Americans generally constituted the minority.

Ethnicity	Number of Districts	Percentage of Sample
80% or more White	5	31
65% - 80% White	5	31
80% or more Black	3	19
80% or more Hispanic	1	6
75% or more Asian	1	6
50% Black, 50% Hispanic	1	6

The socio-economic status (SES) of the communities, based on families' meeting Federal poverty standards, ranged from middle to very low. The majority were located in areas that contained about equal numbers of middle- and low-SES families.

SES	Number of Districts	Percentage of Sample
Middle	3	19
Middle-low	8	50
Low	3	19
Very low	2	13

DISTRICT CHARACTERISTICS

Participating districts ranged from very small to very large. Large districts were generally located in cities, while small districts were located in rural areas or small towns, with one exception: one large district was located in a geographically large county composed of many small towns. District enrollment did not constitute a continuum, but fell into the following clusters.

District Enrollment	Number of Districts	Percentage of Sample
225,000 and over	3	19
20,000 - 60,000	4	25
3,000 - 10,000	7	44
1,400 - 1,800	2	13

One-half of the districts participating in the Site Study received funds, in addition to Title I funds, from one or more of the programs under study (ESAA, Follow Through, and Title VII Bilingual).

Other Programs	Number of Districts	Percentage of Sample
ESAA, FT, Title VII Bilingual	1	6
ESAA, Title VII Bilingual	1	6
FT, Title VII Bilingual	2	13
ESAA	2	13
Title VII Bilingual	2	13
No other programs	8	50

SCHOOL CHARACTERISTICS

The 31 elementary schools (all public) in the Site Study ranged from very small to very large. The majority of schools, however, were medium sized, containing between 200 and 600 students.

School Enrollment	Number of Schools	Percentage of Sample
1,000 and over	1	3
800 - 999	2	6
600 - 799	5	16
400 - 599	11	36
200 - 399	11	36
000 - 199	1	3

The grade range in the participating schools showed several configurations. These differences represented both traditional, local patterns of school grade arrangement, and special patterns devised by districts for the purposes of desegregation.

Grade Range	Number of Schools	Percentage of Sample
K-8	2	6
K-6	16	52
K-5	3	10
K-4	1	3
1-6	4	13
K-1, 3-6	1	3
K, 3-6	2	6
3-6	1	3
P-3	1	3

Low-income students, as defined by eligibility for free/reduced lunch or AFDC, were present in each of the participating schools. ("No data" refers to schools for which information was not obtained.)

Percentage of Low-Income Students	Number of Schools	Percentage of Sample
76-100%	6	19
51-75%	6	19
26-50%	11	36
0-25%	5	16
No data	3	10

Very few students in the sampled schools came from non-English speaking homes.

Percentage of Students from Non-English Speaking Homes	Number of Schools	Percentage of Sample
76%-100%	1	3
51-75%	1	3
26-50%	1	3
0-25%	26	84
No data	2	6

The ethnic composition of the participating schools closely paralleled that of the districts in which they were located. Although at a few schools students were bused for purposes of desegregation, most sample schools served their immediate communities. The majority of schools were predominantly White with Blacks, Hispanics, Asians, or Native Americans in the minority.

Ethnicity	Number of Schools	Percentage of Sample
80% or more White	10	32
65% - 80% White	7	23
80% or more Black	5	16
65% or more Black	2	6
80% or more Hispanic	3	10
80% or more Asian	2	6
50% White-50% Black	1	3
No data	1	3

PROJECT CHARACTERISTICS

Project Age

Projects in the Site Study were of long duration. Fifteen of the 16 (94%) were established 11 or more years ago with more than one-half dating from the 1965 inception of the Title I program. One project had been in existence for seven years. The 31 schools in the Site Study sample exhibited a greater range of funding longevity. Twenty schools (64%) had been funded 11 years or more; eight (26%) had been funded for six to ten years; and three (10%) had received funds for five years or less.

The Design of Student Services

At every site in the sample, services were delivered to students at the schools. These services took the form of remedial mathematics and/or reading instruction. The majority of projects (68%) offered student services exclusively on a pull-out basis; students left their regular classrooms during the day to receive instruction in resource centers and special classrooms. Three sites (19%) combined pull-out instruction with some other form of instruction; in two cases, students were instructed both during class and on a pull-out basis; and in one case, students attended an after-school program in addition to in-class instruction. At two sites (13%) students were instructed exclusively within their regular classrooms.

Project Objectives Addressed to Parental Involvement

Typically, projects stated that one of their objectives for involving parents was to provide opportunities for parents to participate in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of the project. However, some projects had expanded parental involvement objectives to include other areas. Nine (56%) indicated that they intended to help parents understand the purposes and provisions of the Title I project and to provide related information. Six (40%) included the preparation of parents to assist their children with school work in their objectives; five (31%) stated that parents would be encouraged to participate in project activities; and three (20%) listed the improvement of home-school and parent-child relationships among their objectives for parental involvement.

Project Provisions for Parental Involvement

Projects provided parents a number of avenues for involvement. District and School Advisory Councils were the most common provisions for parent participation in the project. Other activities provided by projects were parent education and training sessions (44%), and the opportunity to participate in organized home tutoring programs (13%). All projects invited parents to

attend various events geared toward the improvement of community-school relations. In addition, several staff positions allowed parents on-going participation in the project. At nine sites the position of Parent Coordinator (56%) served the dual purpose of offering a few parents a job on the project staff while ensuring that the responsibility for implementing parental involvement activities was delegated. At 12 sites, the instructional aide position, whether intentionally or unintentionally open to parents, gave parents the opportunity to participate in the instructional process. (These various activities are treated in detail in subsequent chapters.)

Project Personnel

At the district level, all projects were administered either by a Project Director, a Federal Programs Director, or both, in the case of very large projects. District project administration was shared at eight sites by parent coordinators and/or parent coordination managers. In two cases, a Social Worker and a Curriculum Development Manager had major managerial tasks in the project.

The Role of Project Personnel in Parental Involvement

The number of project staff playing a role in parental involvement was large and included various titles. Two projects cited six different project or school staff positions whose occupants had major responsibilities for the implementation of parental involvement activities. All but two projects delegated such responsibilities to two or more staff role groups. Project Directors, and occasionally Federal Programs Directors, were involved with the DAC and in parent activities at the managerial level. More commonly, the associated duties were delegated to Parent Coordinators (56%), who at the district level dealt with the DAC and at the school level dealt with the PAC. In their absence, principals, Title I teachers, aides/tutors, or in a few cases other staff members (e.g., Social Worker, reading specialist) handled school-level parent activities. At every site, at least one staff member held the major responsibility for ensuring that parents became involved in the project.

III. PROJECT FUNDING

Table 3-1 contains information on a number of funding-related variables. We present this information with a great deal of trepidation, for we are not at all confident about the quality of the data. During both the Federal Programs Survey and the Site Study, as we attempted to obtain funding information we encountered two significant problems that led us to be unsure about our findings. First, many projects did not have available in one location the type of information we sought, which frequently meant that respondents had to go to multiple sources for answers to our questions and had to report data about which they had no direct knowledge. Second, and probably most important, there were no consistent methods used for accounting for funding information. This lack of uniformity across sites meant that respondents did not have the same referent as they answered our questions.

An illustration of the latter problem that was most germane to this study concerned the allocations made by projects for parental involvement. We were certain that different districts included different items as costs of parental involvement. Thus, some districts included the salary of a Parent Coordinator; other districts that also had a Parent Coordinator would include that person's salary under a personnel line-item rather than under parental involvement.

Accordingly, we present the following information with some reservations. As we discuss the findings we will point out the degree of our confidence in them, based on our assessment of the quality of the underlying data.

FUNDING LEVELS

Site Study projects varied widely in terms of district Title I grants, from over $67 million to $50,000. Similarly, allocations to schools differed greatly, with a high of almost $400,000 to a low of $10,000. In general the districts and schools with the highest levels of funding were found in the

inner cities of major metropolitan areas, while the locations with the lowest levels occurred in small towns and rural areas. These findings reflected the incidence of poverty-level families.

While we were able to obtain accurate data on district grants, there were peculiarities in our findings. In some cases the figures for large districts were for an entire district grant, while those for other large-city districts were for a subdistrict grant. Accordingly, one cannot conclude that there was a direct correspondence between city size and grant amount, since we had both subdistricts of very large cities and widely-dispersed small-town counties at the highest end of our sample.

Our school-level data were less than ideal. In three instances we were never able to obtain figures for individual schools, and three other districts indicated that there were no grants made to schools, since the districts controlled the projects and simply assigned personnel and materials to schools on as-needed bases.

While we also sought data on all funds available to a district (entertaining the possibility that district wealth might relate to level of parental involvement activities), there was far too much missing data to allow for the determination of patterns. Anywhere from five to seven of the 16 districts could not provide information on local, state, or Federal (other than Title I) funding.

Finally, per-pupil expenditure was requested, again as an indirect measure of district wealth. We obtained such data from 15 districts and found a range from $960 to $1970 per pupil. We believe that the different accounting systems used, as well as actual variations in dollars spent per student, may account for district-to-district differences.

CONTROL OF EXPENDITURES

At the district level we found Title I funds were controlled by different persons or groups. In four cases the Title I Project Director was reported to be significant. Typically, funds were controlled, wholly or in part, by a district financial officer (as we saw in ten cases). And there were three instances of a senior administrator, and two of a school board, exerting some control.

At individual schools, we found that in the majority of cases district personnel managed funds for school projects. We found only one project at which principals controlled school-level Title I funds.

ALLOCATIONS TO PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

The amount of money reported to be allocated for parental involvement ranged from $3 million to none at the district level, and from $80,000 to none at the school level. Many activities were reported to be paid for with these monies, including personnel, advisory council expenses, materials, travel, tutoring, training, and cost-reimbursement. The major contributor to parental involvement costs, when they were reported, was staff salaries (e.g., Parent Coordinators and parent classroom aides).

Unfortunately, these data were not comparable across sites. What was considered a parental involvement cost at one location was not at another. Looking at this another way, items that we considered part of parental involvement--such as DAC expenses, or Parent Coordinator salary--were not included under parental involvement at some sites where such costs were incurred. Thus, the data on district and school parental involvement allocations were quite misleading.

TIMING OF FUNDING

We wished to see if the time at which funds were received affected parental involvement and, particularly, if later receipt limited the range of activities. However, there were only minor variations in the timing; except for one site reporting fall funding, funds were received in late spring or early summer.

	COMPASS	JOHNS CO.	STADIUM	BONNET CO.	KING EDWARD	PLAINS	MEADOW-LANDS	ROLLER	KINGSTOWN	REDLANDS	BRISBANE	BENJAMIN CO.	CLETEVILLE	MOUNTAIN VIEW	MAPLE	SUMMER PLACE
DISTRICT GRANT	67M	13.8M	4.4M	4M	2.9M	2.3M	1.2M	1M	650K	440K	320K	170K	150K	80K	70K	50K
CONTROL AT DISTRICT LEVEL	No data	PD, Fin. Off.	School Board	Fin. Off.	PD, Supt.	PD, Asst. Supt.	Fin. Off.	Fin. Off.	School Brd, Fin. Off.	Fin. Off.	PD, Fin. Off.	No data	Fin. Off.	PD	Supt., Fin. Off.	Fin. Off.
SCHOOL GRANTS	399K 318K	No data	None to schools	81K 79K	99K 44K	No data	107K*	None to schools	None to schools	37K 46K	12K 57K	21K 43K	21K 11K	26K 26K	No data	11K 10K
CONTROL AT SCHOOL LEVEL	No data	Same as district	N/A	Same as district	Same as district	Same as district	No data	N/A	N/A	Same as district	Same as district	No data	Same as district	Same as district	Princi-pals	Same as district
PER-PUPIL EXPENDITURE	1730	1660	1300	1070	1970	1610	1690	1680	1200	1300	1140	960	1700	1650	1480	1400
OTHER FEDERAL FUNDS	No data	14M	No data	No data	1M	No data	1M	96K	1.8M	570K	850K	580K	260K	No data	69K	150K
STATE FUNDS	No data	No data	No data	1.1M	1.5M	No data	520K	11.1M	8.6M	480K	3.2M	3.2M	5.1M	No data	1M	5M
LOCAL FUNDS	No data	No data	No data	30K	No data	No data	35M	7M	230K	No data	1.5M	1M	6.9M	No data	800K	2.1M
DISTRICT PI ALLOCATION	3M	880K	33K	240K	20K	13K	20K	800	6K	No data	40	0	200	200	0	450
SCHOOL PI ALLOCATIONS	60K 30K	No data	No data	80K 80K	300 300	No data	6K*	No data	0 0	No data	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	No data
WHEN FUNDS RECEIVED	Spring	Summer	No data	Summer	Summer	Spring	No data	Summer	Fall	Summer	Summer	Spring	Spring	Spring, Summer	Spring	Spring, Summer

*Only 1 school studied.

LEGEND:

FUNDS
M = Million
K = Thousand

CONTROL
PD = Project Director
Fin. Off. = Financial Office
Supt. = Superintendent
N/A = Not Applicable

Table 3-1. Funding Information

	COMMUNITY			DISTRICT			SCHOOLS					PROJECT					
SITE	LOCATION	NATURE	ETHNICITY	ENROLLMENT	PER PUPIL EXPENDITURE	OTHER FED. PROGRAMS	ENROLLMENT	GRADE RANGE	LOW INCOME STUDENTS	NON-ENGLISH SPEAKING	ETHNICITY	YEARS IN TITLE I	GRANT SIZE	SERVICES	KEY PERSONNEL	PROVISIONS FOR PI	SPECIAL FEATURES
BENJAMIN COUNTY	Southeast	Small Town	W: 85% B: 15%	3410	960	None	650 580	1-6 1-6	30% 37%	0 0	W: 85%, B: 15% W: 85%, B: 15%	14	170K	Pull out	PD	DAC, SACs	Most residents were farmers, the rest worked in factories around the county. There was little ethnically-integrated housing; many students lived as far as 10 miles from their schools.
BONNET COUNTY	Southeast	Small town	W: 75% B: 25%	60,000	1070	None	650 450	K-6 1-6	75% 47%	3% 1%	W: 70% B: 30% W: 70% B: 30%	14	4M	Pull out	Fed Pgm Dir, PD, PCs	DAC, SACs, PCs, PE	Schools were 45 miles apart. One was very rural, with students bused from small, poor communities, the second was situated in a middle-class community with a suburban atmosphere. Residents tended to work outside the county, obtaining services from surrounding towns.
BRISBANE	South-west	Small town	W: 75% B: 15% NA: 10%	3800	1140	None	150 220	K-5 K-5	30% 52%	0 0	W: 70%, B/NA: 30% W: 70%, B/NA: 30%	14	320K	Pull out	PD, PR, Tchrs	DAC	The community had no distinct ethnic neigborhoods, and ranged from some poverty to some wealthy families. Students at the schools lived in walking distance; the few students bused for integration lived less than three miles from their schools.
CLETEVILLE	Northeast	Rural	W: 90%	7000	1700	None	370 250	K-6 K-6	10% 10%	0 2%	W: 90% W: 90%	12	150K	Pull out	PD, SW, Tchrs	DAC, SACs	Homes are widely dispersed, and students were bused to school. Most residents worked in local industries, some farmed. A principal served as part-time Project Director while Social Worker ran the project.
COMPASS	Midwest	Large city	B: 90%	250,000+	1730	FT, TVII	920 1100	K-8 K-8	99% 70%	0 0	B: 99% B: 97%	13	67M	Class-room	PD, PCs, PR	DAC, SACs, PCs, Aides	The two schools were located in an inner-city environment with high poverty, unemployment, and low educational level. Families lived in high-rise apartments or a housing project. The Title I project was citywide, with schools having considerable freedom in determining local programs.

LEGEND:

FUNDS
M = Million
K = Thousand
ND = No Data

STAFF
PD = Project Director
PR = Principal
PC = Parent Coordinator
Fed Pgm Dir = Federal Programs Director
SW = Social Worker
Curr Spec = Curriculum Specialist
Schl Coor = School Coordinator
Tchr = Teacher

ETHNICITY
A = Asian
B = Black
H = Hispanic
NA = Native American
W = White

PROGRAMS
FT = Follow Through
TVII = Title VII
ESAA = Emergency School Aid Act

PROVISIONS FOR PI
DAC = District Advisory Committee
SAC = School Advisory Committee
PE = Parent Education

Title I Sites — Capsule Summaries

	COMMUNITY			DISTRICT			SCHOOLS					PROJECT					
SITE	LOCATION	NATURE	ETHNICITY	ENROLLMENT	PER PUPIL EXPENDITURE	OTHER FED. PROGRAMS	ENROLLMENT	GRADE RANGE	LOW INCOME STUDENTS	NON-ENGLISH SPEAKING	ETHNICITY	YEARS IN TITLE I	GRANT SIZE	SERVICES	KEY PERSONNEL	PROVISIONS FOR PI	SPECIAL FEATURES
JOHNS COUNTY	Southeast	Large city	B: 75% W: 15% H: 10%	225,000	1660	FT, ESAA, TVII	910 770	K,3-6 K-6	96% 78%	0 10%	B: 85%, W: 15% B: 67% W: 20%, H: 13%	15	13.8M	Class-room	Fed Pgm Dir, PD, PCs, PR	DAC, SACs, PC, Aides, PE, Home tutoring	Schools were located in inner-city areas. Students walked to school, although district had some busing. Most parents worked, frequently on evening shifts.
KING EDWARD	South-west	Middle size city	A: 75% W: 20%	45,400	1970	FT, TVII	660 680	K-6 K-6	37% 37%	56% 50%	A: 80%, W: 20% A: 90% W: 10%	14	2.9M	Pull out	Curr Spec, PCs	DACs, PACs, PCs	The district had many recent non-English speaking immigrants. One school was in a low-income area with many transients, the second was in a stable, relatively homogeneous lower-middle class area. The district placed a premium on having parents assimilate into the community.
KINGS-TOWN	South-west	Small Town	H: 88% W: 12%	4300	1200	ESAA, TVII	310 480	1-6 K-6	ND 25%	ND 25%	H: 98% W/NA: 2% H: 80% W/NA: 20%	14	630K	Class-room	PD, PC, Schl Coors	DAC, SACs, PC, PE	While the community was largely low-income, it was rich in land holdings. One school was within students' walking distance, the other was accessible only by bus or auto.
MAPLE	Midwest	Rural	W: 100%	1440	1480	None	240 220	K-6 K-6	14% 11%	0 0	W: 100% W: 100%	7	70K	Pull out	PD	DAC, SACs	Many residents farmed, and the rest were employed in manufacturing industries, retail trade, or at a college. Both schools were distant from students' homes; 80% of the students were bused.
MEADOW-LANDS	South-west	Suburb	W: 60% H: 24% B: 8% A: 8%	20,100	1690	TVII	440	K-6	ND	ND	ND	15	1.2M	Pull out	PD, PC	DAC, SACs, PC, PE	The community included numerous pockets of ethnic groups, and was on the outskirts of a major metropolitan area. Only one school was studied; its students lived within walking distance.

LEGEND:

FUNDS
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K = Thousand
ND: No Data

STAFF
PD = Project Director
PR = Principal
PC = Parent Coordinator
Fed Pgm Dir = Federal Programs Director
SW = Social Worker
Curr Spec = Curriculum Specialist
Schl Coor = School Coordinator
Tchr = Teacher

ETHNICITY
A = Asian
B = Black
H = Hispanic
NA = Native American
W = White

PROGRAMS
FT = Follow Through
TVII = Title VII
ESAA = Emergency School Aid Act

PROVISIONS FOR PI
DAC = District Advisory Committee
SAC = School Advisory Committee
PE = Parent Education

Title I Sites — Capsule Summaries

	COMMUNITY			DISTRICT			SCHOOLS					PROJECT					
SITE	LOCATION	NATURE	ETHNICITY	ENROLLMENT	PER PUPIL EXPENDITURE	OTHER FED. PROGRAMS	ENROLLMENT	GRADE RANGE	LOW INCOME STUDENTS	NON-ENGLISH SPEAKING	ETHNICITY	YEARS IN TITLE I	GRANT SIZE	SERVICES	KEY PERSONNEL	PROVISIONS FOR PI	SPECIAL FEATURES
MOUNTAIN VIEW	Midwest	Small city	W: 88% H: 2% B: 2% NA: 8%	1710	1650	ESAA	350 470	K-6 K-5	37% 38%	1% 1%	W: 89% NA: 9% W: 89% NA: 9%	15	80K	Pull out	PD	Aide	The community was primarily blue collar. Students were bused to one school because of its congested location, while at the other school students lived in walking distance.
PLAINS	Midwest	Large City	W: 70% B: 30%	56,500	1610	ESAA	350 290	P-3 K-1, 3-6	36% 57%	0 0	W: 50%, B: 50% W: 60%, B: 40%	12	2.9M	Pull out	PD, PCs	DAC, SACs PCs, Aides	Project Director was new. One school was in an inner-city area, the second is in an industrial district with many single and retired persons. In many families both parents worked, or a parent held two jobs.
REDLANDS	South-west	Suburb	W: 75% H/B/A: 25%	5600	1300	None	210 280	K-6 K-6	34% 40%	6% 1%	W: 75%, H/B/A: 25% W: 75%, H/B/A: 25%	15	440K	Pull out	Fed Pgm Dir, PC	DAC, SACs PC, Aides	Most residents were living in rental properties. Many students came from a nearby military installation, and the schools were within students' walking distance.
ROLLER	South-west	Middle-size city	B: 93% W: 7%	9400	1680	None	480 490	3-6 K,3-6	60% 60%	0 1%	B: 93%, W: 7% B: 93%, W: 7%	12	1M	Pull out	PD	DAC, SAC	As a result of desegregation mandates, white population has declined in both schools. The schools were located in inner-city locations, and were accessible by public transportation.
STADIUM	North-east	Large city	H: 60% B: 40%	250,000+	1300	TVII	450 570	K-4 K-6	100% 90%	85% 18%	H: 85%, B: 15% B: 75%, H: 25%	13	4.4M	Pull out	Asst Super, PC	PAC, SACs, PC	The district was actually a subdistrict of a very large city. The schools were located in an extremely depressed area with many abandoned buildings. As a result of deteriorating conditions, the schools' enrollments have been declining markedly.
SUMMER PLACE	Midwest	Suburb	W: 98% Other: 2%	4440	1400	None	360 530	K-6 K-6	12% ND	1% 1%	W: 98%, Other: 2% W: 98%, Other: 2%	14	50K	Class-room	PD, DR, Tchr	DAC, SACs, Aides	The district was composed of three separate municipalities, and the two sample schools were located in different communities. Because of the distances involved, both schools were accessible to parents only by auto.

LEGEND:

FUNDS
M = Million
K = Thousand
ND = No Data

STAFF
PD = Project Director
PR = Principal
PC = Parent Coordinator
Fed Pgm Dir = Federal Programs Director
SW = Social Worker
Curr Spec = Curriculum Specialist
Schl Coor = School Coordinator
Tchr = Teacher

ETHNICITY
A = Asian
B = Black
H = Hispanic
NA = Native American
W = White

PROGRAMS
FT = Follow Through
TVII = Title VII
ESAA = Emergency School Aid Act

PROVISIONS FOR PI
DAC = District Advisory Committee
SAC = School Advisory Committee
PE = Parent Education

Title I Sites — Capsule Summaries

CHAPTER 4
THE COORDINATION OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

I. INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes the general roles and activities of individuals who coordinate project-related activities for parents of Title I students. We decided to examine Parent Coordinators because of the potential influence we thought they might have on the quantity and quality of parental involvement activities offered by Title I projects. We examined individuals who were specifically designated by the district or project to coordinate parent activities, as well as those individuals who assumed such responsibilities while actually fulfilling another full-time role.

Within the Title I program, the position of Parent Coordinator (also known as Home-School Liaison, Parent Involvement Specialist, School-Community Involvement Person, and other titles at different sites) was not mandated by

legislation nor required by regulations. When we conducted the Federal Programs Survey, it became apparent that many Title I sites had full-time or part-time persons performing parent coordination duties at the district and the school levels. Nationwide, it was estimated that 62 percent of Title I districts and 32 percent of Title I schools provided parent coordination. These FPS data proved to be consistent with our Site Study findings: of the 16 sites studies, 50 percent of the districts and 39 percent of the schools provided Parent Coordinators.

At two of the seven sites that did not provide Parent Coordinators, other staff members assumed the tasks of parent coordination in addition to their official responsibilities. In one case a Title I Social Worker served in the parent coordination role, while in the other case a Title I Resource Teacher had those responsibilities. Both projects existed on small budgets that allowed for minimal staff. At both sites these individuals had taken on the coordination tasks by default: no one else was available to do so.

In the remainder of this chapter we will follow the convention of referring to all persons who handled parent coordination as Parent Coordinator, regardless of their unique titles within their own projects. Also, we will discuss district-level and school-level Parent Coordinators in the aggregate, in recognition of the significant overlap in their activities.

Section II of the chapter takes up the general roles fulfilled by Parent Coordinators, Section III discusses the characteristics of the individuals fulfilling parent coordination positions, and Section IV describes the activities of Parent Coordinators. Finally, in Section V we summarize our findings regarding Parent Coordinators in Title I projects.

II. ROLE OF THE PARENT COORDINATOR

By whatever title the person was known, Parent Coordinators were defined as individuals who had full- or part-time responsibility for developing and coordinating parent participation in Title I project activities. Following our conceptual framework, parents could (a) be members of advisory councils, (b) be part of the instructional process, (c) take part in parent education offerings, (d) provide non-instructional support to the school or project, and (e) take part in community-school relations activities. We found that Parent Coordinators provided three basic services in these functional areas of parental involvement: facilitation, communication, and administration.

In their role as facilitators of parental involvement activities, Parent Coordinators performed a number of duties. They were generally responsible for contacting speakers; locating resource persons and materials; securing meeting rooms; providing refreshments, decorations, transportation, and babysitting; and making arrangements appropriate to particular events like advisory council meetings, open houses, banquets, and training sessions. In addition, PCs frequently conceived of, organized, and contributed to the planning and designing of such events, and in some cases were responsible for actually conducting them. The success of these events was usually dependent on the Parent Coordinator's ability to recruit parents to attend.

During the Federal Programs Survey, respondents were requested to indicate the two activities engaged in most frequently by Parent Coordinators. We found that 32 percent of the districts and 58 percent of the schools indicated that recruiting parents was one of the most frequent activities.

In addition to their role as facilitator, Parent Coordinators served as a primary conveyor of information among the project, schools, and parents. As communicators, they produced newsletters, flyers, letters, and announcements informing parents of events and inviting their participation. They held or attended meetings at which they informed parents about events, plans, and

policies. PCs were relied upon by school and project staff members to act as a general liaison with the community by mail, by telephone, and in person. Most Coordinators made home visits as part of their recruiting and communicating efforts, and a few visited homes to monitor home tutoring programs. Respondents reported that parents felt more comfortable with Parent Coordinators than with administrators and teachers, and were willing to discuss school and project concerns with the Coordinators.

The Federal Program Survey upheld these findings. In 64 percent of the districts and 56 percent of the schools respondents indicated that informing parents of school and district policies and events was one of the two most frequent activities of Parent Coordinators. In addition, 49 percent of the districts and 25 percent of the schools said that coordinating or conducting workshops to inform parents about Title I regulations and guidelines was a major task.

As facilitators and communicators, Parent Coordinators were required to provide administrative and clerical services. They maintained records of participating and non-participating parents, catalogued resources, and handled correspondence. Some Coordinators helped parents draft letters and translated for parents if requested to do so. In general, Parent Coordinators engaged in numerous tasks associated with maintaining an office and, if in a supervisory position, also handled related administrative duties.

III. CHARACTERISTICS OF PARENT COORDINATORS

We noted earlier that Parent Coordinators were found at 11 of the 16 projects in the Site Study; in nine instances we found full-time coordinators and in two cases the coordinators were part-time. Some of the information we obtained on the characteristics of Parent Coordinators is displayed in Table 4-1. These characteristics and others not reported in Table 4-1 indicate that coordinators have some attributes in common:

- They were predominately women.
- They were older than the typical parent of a Title I student.
- They were better educated than the typical Title I parent. Most had attended college and half had at least a bachelor's degree.
- They represented the major ethnic group served by the project. At some sites it was district or project policy that this be the case.
- They came from parent rather than professional ranks.
- They had a history of community involvement, many having been active in service groups, churches, and non-Title I school affairs.

Beyond the attributes noted above, there were three findings regarding Parent Coordinators that were worth exploring in depth: their attitudes, selection process, and training.

ATTITUDES

Parent Coordinators expressed consistently positive attitudes toward the Title I project and toward parental involvement. They believed that the parental involvement component of the project provided parents an opportunity to understand what Title I and the school could do for their children. Parent

Coordinators reported that participation in activities such as advisory councils, school visitations, and home tutoring helped develop more positive parent-child relationships and resulted in better performance on the parts of students. While all held positive views of the general concept of parental involvement, there were some variations in the emphasis placed on different forms of parental involvement. A few coordinators stressed participation in the governance function, to the exclusion of other functions. More commonly, however, Parent Coordinators tended to interpret participation as support for the project and as attendance at project events.

However, some Parent Coordinator attitudes toward parents themselves were less positive. While some felt that parents were interested in helping their children in any way they could, others held the belief that parents were apathetic and uninterested in their children's education. The latter group of coordinators displayed paternalistic attitudes toward parents, and were less successful in their efforts to communicate with parents and to enlist parental participation in project events.

SELECTION PROCESS

Parent Coordinators were considered either professional or paraprofessional employees of the district. In order to be employed, they had to file formal applications and meet district requirements. These included educational qualifications (sometimes high school graduation, more frequently attendance at college), prior experience in people-oriented positions, and in one case the passing of an examination. At no site was the Parent Coordinator required to be the parent of a Title I student. However, it was the policy of several districts or projects to encourage parents or to give preference to parents for coordinator positions. At these sites principals, teachers, and project staff members recruited already-active parents for positions (e.g., aides, volunteers, or advisory council members). Although candidates were required to make formal application, school and/or project staff were responsible for

final selection. In general, Parent Coordinators acquired their jobs after exhibiting interest in parental involvement aspects of a project, through active participation.

TRAINING

Parent Coordinators received varying amounts of training to prepare them for their assignments. At three sites, no training at all was provided. At two sites, projects provided no formal training but expected Coordinators to absorb information while performing on the job. In addition to on-the-job training, five projects provided more formalized training through workshops and inservice sessions. This consisted of districtwide workshops on Title I regulations, state and district policies, District and School Advisory Council operations, and techniques for involvement of parents. Those projects with specialized parent coordination duties (such as implementation of home tutoring programs, parent education sessions, and classroom instruction by coordinators) provided guidance in those areas. The most extensive training occurred at sites in districts or states that had mandated training programs for all Title I project personnel.

IV. ACTIVITIES OF PARENT COORDINATORS

Table 4-2 presents information on the activities of Parent Coordinators in six different areas. Each of these is discussed subsequently.

INVOLVEMENT WITH PROJECT GOVERNANCE

All Parent Coordinators were responsible for ensuring that advisory councils existed, had the appropriate memberships, and functioned. They provided certain essential services to District and School Advisory Councils. Most were relied upon to provide technical assistance to DACs and PACs: making available information on Title I regulations, locating resource persons to speak at meetings, obtaining materials and supplies, and handling such logistical matters as meeting arrangements and transportation. Further, coordinators recruited members, set agendas, publicized meetings, and communicated with parents about DAC and PAC functions.

Parent Coordinators were expected to attend DAC and PAC meetings. We found that about two thirds of the coordinators actually conducted advisory council meetings, either formally as chairpersons or informally as the dominating force. The interactions of Parent Coordinators with DACs and PACs are treated in Chapters 5 and 6.

INVOLVEMENT WITH THE EDUCATIONAL FUNCTION

Parent Coordinators infrequently were involved with the instructional process in a direct fashion. At one site the coordinator position was combined with that of classroom instructional aide. Otherwise, at three sites PCs in their role as liaison between school and community informed parents of available aide positions and encouraged parents to apply for them.

Indirectly, Parent Coordinators facilitated the instructional process by providing assistance to parents in their efforts to help their own children with schoolwork. At two sites PCs were responsible for implementing formal home

tutoring programs; they trained parents to use materials, provided the materials, and monitored the progress of the program. At five other sites, coordinators provided parents with more general information about the educational process. Such offerings often were categorized as parent education, and covered a range of topics from hints on using mathematics when shopping to courses on the nature of the reading process. Chapter 7 contains details on the part played by Parent Coordinators in the instructional process.

INVOLVEMENT WITH PARENT EDUCATION

The definitions used by districts for parent education were complex, and included many subject areas. We found ten sites where parent education programs were offered as part of the Title I project. At eight of these ten sites, Parent Coordinators participated through such actions as organizing and designing workshops, recruiting participants, handling logistics, or providing instructors and materials. Details of Parent Coordinator actions regarding parent education appear in Chapter 8.

INVOLVEMENT WITH SCHOOL SUPPORT

Parent Coordinators were generally responsible for gaining whatever non-instructional support parents gave to the Title I project. In their role as implementors of other project activities, Parent Coordinators asked parents at four sites to assist the project and the schools. Our data suggested that many parents were willing to give resouces to the project, provided they knew what was needed and that their efforts were, in some fashion, organized. At four sites Parent Coordinators fulfilled this function. See Chapter 8 for further information on Parent Coordinators and the school support function.

INVOLVEMENT WITH COMMUNITY-SCHOOL RELATIONS

At ten of the 11 sites providing coordination, Parent Coordinators were active in communications between parents and their schools, and were seen as a major link between parents and their schools. Administrators relied on coordinators

to keep parents informed of project and school activities. Also, coordinators conceived of and organized social events, open houses, Title I orientation sessions, and other methods directed toward the exchange of information about the Title I project. In addition, they frequently played an advocate role for parents, representing their concerns at meetings with project and school personnel. The involvement of Parent Coordinators in the community-school relations function is described in Chapter 8.

INVOLVEMENT WITH SOCIAL SERVICES

Although not officially called for in a job description, Parent Coordinators at four sites had assumed a social service role, i.e., helping parents cope with the problems of their daily living (e.g., joblessness, lack of food and clothing, child truancy). Home visitations afforded these coordinators the opportunity to become personally involved with home-based problems of parents, and some did so to the exclusion of conducting project business. In one case, the PC felt that most parents were sufficiently beset by the deprivation of necessities that they were not able to participate in the project in any manner.

V. DISCUSSION

The position of Parent Coordinator was established in response to a need on the part of Title I projects to have someone directly responsible for the implementation of activities calling for parental participation. In several cases state officials initiated the development of the position or requested that districts do so. In other cases the role evolved as a result of project components that required parent-staff contact for their implementation. Parent coordination is, by and large, a recent phenomenon; the role generally has been instituted in the last four or five years of projects that have been in operation for as many as 15 years.

Parent Coordinators were central to the implementation of parental involvement activities at many sites in our study. As will be developed in subsequent chapters, coordinators were often the major factor contributing to the types of parental involvement activities carried out, and to the degree of success realized by the activities. As our tale unfolds, the critical nature of Parent Coordinators will emerge and we will frequently draw conclusions regarding coordinators.

The parent coordination position generally was considered to be an important one in a Title I project. Coordinators served as an intermediary between the district, school, or project and parents of served students. This delicately-balanced position contributed both positively and negatively to parental participation. On the positive side, coordinators were frequently either present or former Title I parents who had a history of involvement with the project as paraprofessionals or advisory council members. They were familiar with the problems and concerns of Title I parents, and parents often reported that they could identify with Parent Coordinators. Since the backgrounds of Parent Coordinators were closer to those of Title I parents than was typically true of professional staff members, coordinators were able to communicate better with parents and were more successful in engaging parents in project functions.

On the other hand, Parent Coordinators in their intermediary role were in a position to interpret parental involvement according to their own attitudes and beliefs. Many worked under minimal direct supervision, and had great latitude in how they accomplished their tasks. Parent Coordinators aspiring to personal power and having a need to control others could and sometimes did utilize parental involvement activities to realize their own objectives. Some coordinators assumed a paternalistic stance with parents, restricting parental input to the project on the assumptions that parents did not have sufficient knowledge to make meaningful contributions and that parents needed to be shielded from situations and persons where they could be harmed. Finally, coordinators could inject their own feelings into communications between parents and project staff members, filtering the information they were to convey.

	FULL TIME									PART TIME	
	COMPASS	JOHNS CO.	STADIUM	BONNET CO.	KING EDWARD	PLAINS	MEADOW-LANDS	KINGS-TOWN	REDLANDS	CLETEVILLE	MAPLE
NUMBER AND SEX	4F 1M	3F	1F	2F	3F	2M	1F	1F	2F	1F (Full time SW)	2F (Full time teachers)
TYPE	5 schl.	1 dist., 2 schl.	1 dist.	2 schl.	1 dist., 2 schl.	2 dist.	1 dist.	1 dist.	1 dist., 1 schl.	1 dist.	2 schl.
AGE	3: 30s 2: 40s	2: 30s 1: 70s	1: 30s	1: 30s 1: 40s	1: 30s 1: 40s 1: 50s	2: 40s	1: 30s	1: 40s	2: 40s	1: 40s	1: 30s
ETHNICITY	5B	3B	1W	1B, 1W	3A	2W	1H	1H	1H, 1W	1W	2W
EDUCATION	No data	2: HS+ 1: Coll	1: HS	2: HS+	3: HS	2: Coll +	1: HS+	1: HS+	1: HS 1: HS+	1 Coll	2: Coll
PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE	5 PP	1 T, 2 PP	1 Vol.	2 PP	3 Vol.	2 PR	1 PP	1 Vol.	1 PP, 1 Vol.	1 SW	2 T
TRAINING	OJT	OJT, formal	OJT, formal	OJT, formal	OJT, formal	No data	OJT	None	OJT, formal	None	None
ATTITUDE TOWARD PROJECT	◒	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	◒
ATTITUDE TOWARD PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT	◒	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	○
ATTITUDE TOWARD PARENTS	◒	◒	⊖	●	●	●	●	◒	●	●	○

LEGEND:

ETHNICITY
- A = Asian
- B = Black
- H = Hispanic
- W = White

EDUCATION
- HS = High school graduate,
- HS+ = Some college
- Coll = College graduate
- Coll + = Graduate education

EXPERIENCE
- PP = Paraprofessional
- PR = Principal
- SW = Social Worker
- T = Title I teacher
- Vol. = Volunteer

ATTITUDES
- ● = Very positive
- ◒ = Positive
- ○ = Neutral
- ⊖ = Negative

TRAINING
- OJT = on the job

Table 4–1. Characteristics of Parent Coordinators

	FULL TIME									PART TIME	
	COMPASS	JOHNS CO.	STADIUM	BONNET CO.	KING EDWARD	PLAINS	MEADOW-LANDS	KINGSTOWN	REDLANDS	CLETEVILLE	MAPLE
PROJECT GOVERNANCE	Organize DAC/SAC meetings Attend meetings	Organize DAC/SAC meetings Active at meetings Provide info. and materials Train members	Organize DAC/SAC meetings Active at meetings Provide info. and materials Train members	Organize DAC/SAC meetings Active at meetings Provide info. and materials Train members	Organize DAC/SAC meetings Active at meetings Provide info. and materials Train members	Organize DAC/SAC meetings Provide info. and materials	Organize DAC/SAC meetings Attend meetings Provide info. and materials Train members	Organize DAC/SAC meetings Attend meetings Provide info. and materials Train members	Organize DAC/SAC meetings Active at meetings Provide info. and materials Train members	Organize DAC/SAC meetings Attend meetings Provide info. and materials Train members	Organize DAC/SAC meetings Active at meetings Provide info. and materials Train members
EDUCATION: PAID AIDES		Recruit aides			Tutor students Help teachers		Recruit aides		Recruit aides	Train aides	
EDUCATION: VOLUNTEERS									Recruit volunteers		
EDUCATION: HOME TUTORING		Train for home tutoring		Recruit and train for home tutoring							
PARENT EDUCATION	Recruit parents	Conduct workshops Recruit parents		Conduct workshops Recruit parents	Conduct workshops Recruit parents	Conduct workshops	Conduct workshops Recruit parents	Conduct workshops	Conduct workshops		Conduct workshops
SCHOOL SUPPORT		Recruit volunteers Maintain records		Recruit volunteers	Recruit volunteers Maintain records		Recruit volunteers	Recruit volunteers	Recruit volunteers Maintain records		
COMMUNITY-SCHOOL RELATIONS	Visit homes	Visit homes Prepare documents Organize events Recruit parents		Visit homes Organize events Recruit parents	Visit homes Prepare documents Organize events Recruit parents	Visit homes	Prepare documents Organize events Recruit parents	Organize events Recruit parents	Visit homes Multi-cultural displays Prepare documents Organize events	Visit homes Prepare documents Organize events	Prepare documents
SOCIAL SERVICES	Provide services			Provide services					Provide services	Provide services	

Table 4–2. Activities of Parent Coordinators

CHAPTER 5
NATURE OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN THE DISTRICT-LEVEL GOVERNANCE OF TITLE I

I. INTRODUCTION

From its beginning, the Title I program has included mechanisms for parents to participate in the governance of local projects. The primary mechanism is the parent advisory council; since 1971 District Advisory Councils have been required by Federal legislation and regulations. (School Advisory Councils, mandated in 1974, are treated in the next chapter.)

Parental participation in the governance of Title I projects has its roots in the concept of participatory democracy. This concept holds that in a democracy citizens have the right to participate in the forming of policies and making of decisions that may affect their lives. The concept was formally articulated in the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 with the now-famous requirement that poverty programs be developed with the "maximum feasible participation of

residents of the areas and the members of the groups served." The earliest legislation for Title I was accompanied by a criterion for implementation, established by the Commissioner of Education, that parents be involved in developing local project applications. The language in the Economic Opportunity Act was mirrored in later Title I mandates calling for the "maximum practical involvement" of parents in all phases of Title I.

For the present study, we defined the governance function as parental participation in the decision-making process. Our focus was, naturally, on the District Advisory Council and how its parent members participated in making decisions about the project, but we also looked for ways that other parent groups or individual parents were involved in project decision making. Since we found few instances in which other groups or individuals were actively involved with project decisions, this chapter is devoted to governance through advisory councils.

Having defined the governance function as parental participation in the decision-making process, we determined that there were three decision areas of primary importance. We arrived at the three after a careful review of literature on citizen participation in social and political endeavors suggested that they were the most important for an operational project. The first concerns decisions about project services for students and encompasses decisions about the kinds of services, the method of service delivery, and materials to be included in those services. Second, we looked at decisions regarding the project budget--not limited to a budgetary line item for parental involvement but extending to the entire project budget. The third area was personnel; we were interested in decisions about the hiring, assignment, and evaluation of project personnel, both professional and paraprofessional. There are other decision areas that could have been examined as well as these three. Among them are decisions regarding the structure and operation of a parent advisory group itself. We concluded that decision making on, for instance, meeting dates or membership requirements was of lesser importance than decisions focused on the project and its procedures for achieving student objectives.

PLAN FOR THE CHAPTER

The chapter is organized in four major sections. In the remainder of this section we provide a summary of the Title I regulations concerning parents and the governance of projects, and a summary of our major findings. In Part II we describe in detail a number of findings concerning District Advisory Councils. Part III is composed of an extensive treatment of our major findings, with particular attention devoted to the factors that contributed to these findings and the consequences of parental involvement in governance. In Part IV we present our conclusions regarding governance, based on our various findings.

This chapter contains a great deal more information than will be discussed in the text. We collected data on a vast array of variables in the governance area. Rather than attempting to discuss all this data, we have chosen to focus on major findings in the text and to portray all the data by way of tables. The reader is encouraged to look carefully at the tables, to satisfy personal information needs.

GOVERNANCE IN TITLE I REGULATIONS

During the data collection period for this study, the Title I program was operating under a set of regulations derived from the 1976 legislation. These regulations described two ways in which parents were to be involved with project governance, through a District Advisory Council and through School Advisory Councils.

Key points regarding the regulations for parent advisory councils are summarized below.

- The majority of the members were to be parents of children currently participating in the project, or of children who would participate in a proposed project.

- Members were to be selected by parents in project schools.

- The District Advisory Group was to be given the responsibility for advising the local educational agency in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of the project.

- The District Advisory Group was to be provided with information concerning the project.

- The District Advisory Group was to operate under procedures that insured timely and proper performance.

- The state educational agency was to determine that councils received training materials and orientation.

Many state educational agencies have prepared their own Title I guidelines. These provide additional guidance on the structure and functioning of advisory councils. In the main these state guidelines attempt to clarify the Federal regulations, although they may add requirements going beyond but not conflicting with Federal regulations (e.g., requiring that the District Advisory Council and the School Advisory Council chairpersons certify that the councils had taken part in planning the project).

During the period of the study, Congress enacted a reauthorization of the legislation for Title I. Called the 1978 Amendments, the reauthorization provided an increase in the specificity of the mandate concerning District and School Advisory Councils. While the then U.S. Department of Education had not released regulations for the new legislation during the time we were collecting data, some districts indicated that they had already begun modifying their approach to parental involvement in anticipation of what the new regulations would say. Certain of the data we obtained are likely to have been influenced by such anticipatory actions.

SUMMARY OF MAJOR FINDINGS

There are four major findings regarding parental involvement in project governance, by means of the District Advisory Council. These are summarized below and are discussed in greater detail throughout the chapter.

- With one exception, all districts had a District Advisory Council operating, and invariably the majority of the DAC members were parents.

- Overall, there was little involvement of District Advisory Councils in the governance of Title I projects. With few exceptions, parents did not participate in decisions that were made about Title I projects. Parents were not active in the governance of projects.

- There were four relatively distinct patterns of District Advisory Council participation in decision making. At the lowest level was an instance in which a DAC did not even exist. Next, there were DACs that operated only to receive information about the project. The third pattern was one in which the DAC had token involvement in decision making. Such DACs may have discussed important project matters, but their inputs made no difference in project decisions, which the DAC rubber stamped. Finally, there were DACs where there was true involvement with project decisions, i.e., DACs where the advice offered by parents had a real impact on the ultimate decision.

- There were observable differences in DACs at smaller and large communities. In general, the DACs in the larger communities were more active. There was a strong tendency for the least involved DACs to be found in the smaller cities and rural areas, and a contrary tendency for more involved DACs to be located in the larger cities.

II. PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN TITLE I ADVISORY COUNCILS

Our examination of District Advisory Councils was carried out at 16 locations in the nation. Of the 16, nine sites were located in large or middle-sized cities and their suburbs, and seven sites were in small towns or rural regions. We found one location where a District Advisory Council had never been formed, and one site where the DAC was not limited to Title I but was formed to deal with all specially-funded Federal, state, and local programs. Otherwise the remaining 14 DACs were conventional groups whose purpose was to serve as the Title I project's district-level governance body.

As will emerge later there were three sites with large memberships (i.e., 78, 111, and 140 members). These occurred because the DAC was composed of representatives of schools (or subdistricts) in major metropolitan areas with numerous participating schools or subdistricts.

Within major metropolitan areas, the hierarchical structure for advisory councils was complex. Many large districts had a three-tiered arrangement, i.e., advisory councils at the school level, an intermediate level, and districtwide. The role of the intermediate council differed across the nation. Some served as a convenience for the flow-through of information and the training of parents, but played no part in project governance; governance activities were carried out in the districtwide council. Others were the seat of governance activities, and the districtwide council served only in a titular capacity. When we recognized this variation, we determined which council was the more important with regard to governance and focused our attention on only that body. In this chapter, then, the District Advisory Council referred to may have been a districtwide group that had under it a number of essentially powerless subdistrict councils, or it may have been a subdistrict council that exercised power.

Beyond the three major findings already outlined, there were a number of subsidiary findings regarding DACs. These are presented subsequently, in conjunction with tables that display information on the variables included in

our investigation of the governance function. The presentation is organized under four headings related to the DAC: Structure and Organization, Membership and Selection, Support Features, and Functioning. The categories in the four tables were included either because they relate to Title I regulations, or because the study staff felt they might contribute to understanding advisory councils.

STRUCTURE AND ORGANIZATION

The findings for a range of variables concerning the structure and logistics of District Advisory Councils are displayed in Table 5-1. The 16 districts are arranged in order of community size, with the largest communities to the left and the smallest to the right.

The most notable finding in Table 5-1 was the extent to which project personnel were active in the critical logistics of DACs. In 14 of the 15 sites with DACs, project personnel were active participants in setting the agendas for meetings; and, in eight of the sites, project personnel either led meetings or shared in the leadership role. The latter finding is somewhat misleading. While the table indicates that the DAC chairperson was the meeting leader at seven sites, in two cases the chairperson was a district or project employee. That meant that DACs whose meetings were directed by a parent having no relationship to the district or project were found in less than half of the sites. The dominance of project staff is even more apparent when the identity of the person who actually conducted DAC meetings is considered. The entries reflect our Field Researchers' considered judgments based on numerous interviews and observations of DAC meetings, so the table shows who was nominally in charge and who really conducted meetings at a given site.

MEMBERSHIP AND SELECTION

Table 5-2 displays information on variables concerning the members of the District Advisory Council. In all cases the DAC met the Federal mandate of

having more than half of its membership composed of parents. While the typical DAC member had been elected to the DAC by a school-level Parent Advisory Council there were some other routes followed: in one case, a district wide election was held; in one case, principals appointed DAC members; in two cases, the PTA elected DAC members; and in four cases, parent members were volunteers. Among non-parent members of DACs, teachers and administrators predominated; in only four sites were community members found.

SUPPORT FEATURES

The most critical finding in Table 5-3 was the isolation of the DAC. The vast majority of DACs had very little communication with parents, the community, or schools. This meant that DACs conducted whatever activities they did in relative isolation, and few persons outside of the group had any awareness of those activities. Anecdotal comments verified this. Few respondents who were not DAC members reported knowing of its activities, and some were unaware of its existence.

A second major finding was that DACs received little training that would help them to function effectively. Almost half of the DACs in this study received no training at all and, among those that did, only four were provided with training intended to help the members with group processes. Most training centered around the Title I program, with a focus on DAC members acquiring an understanding of Title I.

FUNCTIONING

Table 5-4 contains information on a number of variables concerning the functioning of District Advisory Councils. The organizing feature of these variables is the governance function and the participation of parents in the decision-making process.

We found that 80 percent of the sites had formalized a role for the District Advisory Council in either DAC bylaws or other project documents. Invariably, this role was described as advising project personnel, and the typical role definition was a restatement of the Federal regulation calling for the DAC to participate in project planning, implementation, and evaluation.

The entries regarding decision areas and level of involvement summarize our findings regarding DAC participation in crucial project decision making. Four topics were considered of paramount importance: review of the project proposal, student services, budget, and personnel. We also defined three levels of DAC involvement with these decision areas: none, for those cases where either the critical areas were never brought before the DAC or, if they were, it was only so that project personnel could make reports to the membership; token, where a DAC discussed the topics, but the discussions were not followed by any action on the part of project staff members; and advisement, the condition where a DAC's advice was solicited by the project staff and was generally heeded.

Analysis of these two lines in Table 5-4 brought us to two of our major findings regarding parents in the governance role. Overall, it was clear that there were very few instances of parents giving advice that was meaningful regarding critical project topics. Second, the 16 sites arrayed themselves differently, as follows:

- One site at which no DAC existed.
- Seven sites where important topics were never brought before the DAC, or where the DAC heard only reports about important topics.
- Five sites at which DACs discussed important topics, but any advice that emerged did not influence project decisions.
- Three sites where DAC advice had impact on important project decisions.

Among the 15 DACs there were five that did not consider the four important decision areas. That is, at these five sites the DAC actually met, but the four important decision areas were not taken up at the meetings. Some explanation of this phenomenon is called for.

At Roller the DAC had been only a paper organization in the past, meeting sporadically and seldom accomplishing much. The year of our study the new Title I Project Director was attempting to revitalize the DAC, and all meetings were devoted to either organizational matters or training of members. The King Edward DAC devoted most of its time to internal training and to such parent activities as helping school councils to function and organizing parent education offerings. At Brisbane the DAC was almost non-existent, since the few meetings were attended by but a handful of parents, and the meeting subsequently revolved around discussions among Title I personnel. And, at both Benjamin County and Maple, we found that meetings, which were well attended by parent members, focused on discussions of general school topics and not on the Title I project.

Table 5-4 presents additional evidence concerning the influence project personnel had over DACs. Earlier we noted that project staff members were quite active in setting agendas and in directing meetings. An overall assessment of this emerges from consideration of the entries concerning the powerful persons at each DAC. We found two sites where the Chairperson was the most powerful individual, three sites where the Chairperson and a staff member shared power, and nine sites at which the Project Director, the Parent Coordinator, or the Social Worker was the true power figure.

III. DISCUSSION: CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES

Three principal findings regarding District Advisory Councils were summarized at the beginning of this chapter. In this section we will consider these findings in more detail. The presentation will focus on the factors that we determined were related to the major findings. For each of the three findings we attempt here to explain how they came to be. At the end of this section we present information on the consequences of parental participation in project governance through District Advisory Councils. That latter treatment describes the outcomes of DAC involvement in decision making.

The three main findings were as follows: (1) there was very little parental involvement in project governance; (2) DACs took on a range of levels regarding participation in decision making; and (3) there are identifiable differences between DACs in larger and smaller communities. For ease of explication the third finding is discussed first, below.

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN LARGER AND SMALLER COMMUNITIES

Tables 5-1 through 5-4 are arranged so that the larger districts appear to the left and the smaller districts to the right. In all, there are nine of the larger communities, made up of large cities and their suburbs, and seven smaller communities, composed of small cities and rural communities. Examination of Tables 5-1 through 5-4 indicates that there were characteristics that distinguished between the two groupings.

In Table 5-1 it can be seen that DACs in the larger communities were generally larger, met more frequently, had somewhat longer meetings, had more parental participation in setting the agenda and leading meetings, and distributed minutes to all members more frequently. Differences between the two groups are not as pronounced in Table 5-2; there data indicate that the larger communities tended to have a somewhat greater proportion of parent members coming from minority groups and to have more DACs with community members. Table 5-3 shows that the larger community DACs had more intra-DAC communication

mechanisms and were more likely to have received training, particularly training going beyond treatment of Title I. The data in Table 5-4 indicate these trends: DACs in larger communities had higher levels of involvement with project topics, and DACs in smaller communities had lesser degrees of activity, apparently existing because the Federal mandate required them.

We concluded that the differences between DACs in larger and smaller communities were likely due to several intertwined factors. First, the Title I projects in smaller communities typically served fewer students, both in totality and as a proportion of the total student population. Because of this, there were fewer parents who could be involved with advisory councils. Second, the Title I project formed a minor part of the district's total instructional program, and did not seem to merit much attention from parents. Finally, the small number of student participants meant that the total grant size was small as well, and little if any money was devoted to parental involvement. There were Parent Coordinators (PCs) at only three of the seven smaller community sites, while PCs were found at six of the nine larger community sites.

LOW LEVEL OF PARENT PARTICIPATION IN PROJECT GOVERNANCE

From Table 5-4 it is possible to conclude that parents, through the District Advisory Council, did not have much participation in the governance of Title I projects at our 16 sites. We were able to find only three DACs whose advice regarding critical project topics was actually taken into account as the project was planned and implemented. Further, when we examined each of those three DACs, we found that the extent to which their voices were heard was quite modest. In each case, the DAC participated in decisions concerning one important area.

At Redlands, the DAC was regularly consulted regarding the project's budget; this consultation was solicited early enough so that DAC recommendations could have had an effect, and we found that the DAC recommendations regarding the expenditure of Title I funds were almost always incorporated in the project design.

In the Compass District the DAC had a unique role to play. Each year it determined the types of services that were to be offered to local schools; each school then decided what services to include in the school-level project. A variety of suggested "programs" were brought to the DAC for consideration, and after examining these alternatives the DAC determined which programs would be used in the district during the following year. In this way the DAC exercised considerable influence over both student services and support activities.

The Johns County DAC was consulted each year regarding the design of the project and had critical influence over decisions regarding the types of services for students and the methods of delivering them. The DAC made the (one-time) decision to provide services after the regular school day and regularly was consulted regarding textbooks that were to be used. This DAC was considered quite effective in determining the specifics of student services.

RANGE OF PARTICIPATION IN DECISION MAKING

An examination of the data in Table 5-4 shows not only that DACs had little participation in decision making, but also that there were different levels of DAC involvement with critical project topics. We were able to identify four such levels which were outlined earlier; Figure 5-1 defines the levels more precisely. At the end of this chapter are brief case studies of individual sites that illuminate the patterns.

Having identified these four patterns, we then turned to an examination of a number of variables to determine the factors that might have contributed to the levels found. While most variables showed no meaningful relationship with levels of DAC functioning, we did find eight that bore systematic relationships. These major contributory factors are displayed in Table 5-5, where the 16 sites are arranged in order of DAC involvement with project topics.

No Involvement	The DAC played no role in project decisions. The DAC may have been informed about project activities but did not participate in decisions about those activities. Within this category were sites where DAC meetings were devoted to reports from the staff about the project, but there was no expectation that the project would change as a result of those reports.
Token Involvement	This category was characterized by the project staff's prominence in decision making. The DAC had limited opportunities for involvement and typically acted as a "rubber stamp." There were two variations within this category: 1) DAC meetings provided a forum for presentation of project matters, but the DAC neither questioned nor contributed to plans; (2) the DAC actively engaged in discussions of project topics and questioned staff plans during meetings, occasionally offering ideas. Nonetheless, it was either persuaded by staff arguments or was unable to get its contributions incorporated into the project.
Advisement	The DAC gave advice that was heeded by project staff, or actually made decisions on its own. To have been placed in this category there must have been evidence that DAC review and approval of items frequently resulted in changes. Also, there must have been evidence of a pattern of advice being taken or decisions being made; it was not sufficient for there to have been only one instance of actual influence by the DAC.

Figure 5-1. Levels of DAC Involvement in Governance

The first variable related to level of DAC involvement in decision making was that the state had guidelines for Title I, which were known to districts and were being implemented. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, state guidelines usually attempt to clarify the Federal regulations, then go on to include additional requirements concerning parent participation through DACs. We found that at seven sites project personnel were aware of state guidelines and carried out parental involvement activities with those guidelines in mind.

Our second variable concerned the DAC having a specified authority over some project dimension, with that authority being clearly known by DAC members and project staff. At three sites--the three where the DAC's advice was heeded--we discovered that the DAC had a specified role to play in the decision-making process.

In an earlier chapter we described the role of the Parent Coordinator and provided information on the characteristics of PCs we found at different sites. We discovered a relationship between the PC's role and DAC decision making and have portrayed this in Table 5-5. In the table we show three levels regarding the Parent Coordinator: sites where there was no PC, sites where the PC dominated the DAC, and sites where the PC provided support to help the DAC to succeed. Dominating PCs were found to exert considerable control over the content of DAC meetings and to take over the actual running of DAC meetings. Supportive PCs, on the other hand, were more in the background with respect to control of meetings and were particularly involved with logistical support so that DAC meetings were held on schedule, were well attended, and ran smoothly.

The next two variables in Table 5-5 address attitudes. The first identifies sites at which the prevalent attitude among project staff members was that parental involvement was equated with parents supporting schools and the project. Staff members with this attitude saw a less active role for parents, especially regarding governance. The other attitudinal variable is directed toward parents' attitudes and indicates those sites where parents typically expressed an attitude of satisfaction with the project as it was being

operationalized, and/or an attitude that professionals rather than parents should make educational decisions.

The sixth variable identifies sites that had a decision-making structure such that important decisions were the exclusive province of high-level administrators. In some cases this was the Board of Education, in others it was the Superintendent or the Title I Project Director. At these sites the understood policy was that decisions in the areas we had marked for special attention (project services, budget, and personnel) were made by certain, designated, persons.

The final two variables are repeated from earlier tables in this chapter. One treats training provided to the District Advisory Council and has three levels: no training at all, training to improve DAC members' understanding of Title I, and training to improve members' skills in group processes. The second variable deals with the person(s) who had been identified as being the most powerful concerning the DAC. We used three categories for this variable: a professional (the Project Director, Parent Coordinator, or Social Worker); a parent (the DAC chairperson); and a professional and parent with shared power.

An examination of Table 5-5 provides valuable insights into the levels of DAC functioning regarding the making of decisions about important project matters. Typically, those advisory councils that had a major role in project decision making had the following attributes: they were in states that had specific Title I guidelines that were implemented; they were affiliated with Title I projects that offered a clear authority role to the DAC; they were in districts where there was a Title I Parent Coordinator who provided support to the DAC; the DAC had received training in how to function as a group;* and power in the council resided in a parent.

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* Table 5-5 indicates no training in Title I for the Compass DAC. This occurred because most members had been on the DAC for many years and had already learned the nuances of the program.

At the other extreme, the least active DACs were characterized by these dimensions: their states had no Title I guidelines; the DAC had no specified authority; there was no Parent Coordinator; the staff attitude was that parents should only provide support for the project and its schools; the parental attitude was that the project was being carried out satisfactorily and/or parents should leave decisions to professionals; DACs either received no training or only training to acquaint them with Title I; and, the most powerful person was a professional.

Not surprisingly, the DACs in the middle of the spectrum--those that provided only token advice and operated largely as rubber stamps--demonstrated a more cloudy picture of contributory factors. In general, they were in projects with Parent Coordinators who dominated the DAC and were DACs with power residing in a professional or shared between professional and parent.

The simplest interpretation of these patterns is that the sites where parents had the highest level of involvement with critical decisions were those whose background features set the stage for parental activism (e.g., presence of state guidelines, clear specification of DAC authority, and provision of meaningful training), and whose ongoing dynamics facilitated a strong parent role (e.g., the chairperson had assumed a power position, and the Parent Coordinator supplied assistance in DAC operations). Contrarily, extensive parent participation was absent when there was minimal pressure for it (e.g., neither staff nor parents had the attitude that parents should take part in governance) and when situational dynamics did not foster a significant role for parents (e.g., there was no Parent Coordinator and staff members were the most powerful persons regarding the DAC).

The major finding considered here--that there is a range of involvement among DACs regarding project decision making--had emerged from the earlier Federal Programs Survey we conducted. In that survey we obtained information from 129 districts concerning their DACs and discerned three levels of DAC participation in decision making. These levels are approximately equivalent to the levels identified in the 16 sites studied intensively during the Site Study.

(In the Federal Programs Survey we found two districts that did not have a DAC; in the Site Study there was one such district.)

There is a marked discrepancy between the extent of DAC participation in decision making identified in our two substudies. In the Federal Programs Survey, respondents (typically the Title I Project Director) reported fairly high levels of parental participation in the making of important project decisions. For instance, these respondents indicated that as many as one-third of the DACs fell into the category of true DAC advisement. When we examined DACs in detail during the Site Study, we found far fewer cases of true advisement. This discrepancy can be accounted for by the differences in interpretation of DAC involvement between district respondents and ourselves. For many district administrators a DAC was perceived as being involved with a project decision if the topic was brought before the advisory council for any type of consideration. We, on the other hand, applied the criterion that DAC consideration must lead to advice that is taken into account and, on occasion, to a modification to project plans. Because of these differences in interpretation of "involvement," there were many districts whose staff viewed the DAC as active participants in decision making, but we did not. Most such cases occurred when the staff would present to the DAC a completed proposal or a fully-developed plan which was seen by parents as a finished product and therefore occasioned either no discussion or minor questioning. We therefore placed the no-discussion instances in the "No Involvement" category, and the minor-questioning instances in the "Token Involvement" category.

Certain of our findings about major contributory factors were also presaged in the Federal Programs Survey. Since a principal contributory factor had to do with the extent to which project staff members controlled the District Advisory Group, the Federal Programs Survey is illuminating. In the FPS, it was reported that in almost half of the districts a staff member ran the meetings, and, in the vast majority of districts, staff members played an active role in setting meeting agendas. As the Site Study unfolded, we found that project staff members were the most powerful persons in more than half

the sites. This suggests that survey respondents may not have been aware of the extent to which staff members controlled DAC functioning.

Our findings are also related to those of other investigators, although the present study went much farther than had any earlier investigations. The NIE survey of compensatory education* was carried out in 1975-76 and included 100 districts in which DAC chairpersons were interviewed. Survey results indicated that districts interpreted the meaning of "advisory" in the legislation in widely varying ways, that less than half of the chairpersons saw the DAC role as advisory, that about a fourth of the DACs were reported to have received training, and that less than a fourth of the DACs were involved with the planning of the project's grant application. In addition, the survey respondents noted that actions taken by states to enforce regulations can influence DAC activities.

A study of state and local administration of Title I** was carried out in 1975-76 at 32 districts in eight states. In this study it was determined that there were few instances in which DACs were involved with project decision making, and that most DACs operated to either support the project (in a rubber stamping mode) or to improve parent skills through parent education. The study identified as important factors in DAC operations the commitment of district personnel to a decision-making role for parents, and a formalized opportunity for DAC involvement in decisions. Further, the study found that little training was provided to DACs to facilitate their operations.

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*National Institute of Education. Evaluating Compensatory Education. Washington, D.C.: NIE, 1976.

**Goettel, R. J. and B. A. Kaplan. A Study of the Administration of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act Title I in Eight States. Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse Research Corp., 1977.

As part of an investigation of alternative approaches to fund allocations in 13 districts* an examination of DAC functioning was conducted. This study identified two important factors affecting DAC involvement with local projects: the lack of specific requirements regarding DACs in the law limited DAC participation in project matters; and, a Parent Coordinator was influential in increasing a DAC's involvement with a project.

In 1978 a small-scale investigation was carried out of eight District Advisory Councils.** The study found that DACs had some impact on projects, when impact included a wide range of project matters. Considerably less impact was found when DAC involvement with important decisions was examined.

Finally, two organizations that have had extensive ongoing relationships with parents in Title I projects have reported on their observations regarding DACs.*** In identifying barriers to successful DAC involvement with decision making, these organizations identified the following factors: the attitudes of professionals that parents should not take part in decision making and should instead receive training in helping their own children; the attitudes of parents that they are not necessary to a project; the lack of leadership among project and district personnel; the lack of training to DAC members; and, the need for clarity on the role of the DAC in Federal legislation and regulations. In addition, two factors were identified that had positive

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*Vanecko, J. J., F. X. Archambault, and N. L. Ames. ESEA Title I Allocation Policy: Demonstration Study. Cambridge, Mass.: Abt Associates, Inc., 1977.

**CPI Associates. An Exploratory Study of the Impact of Parent Advisory Councils on the Management and Administration of Title I Programs at the Local Level. Dallas, Tex.: CPI, 1979.

***L. Brown (Federal Education Project). "Problems in Implementing Statutory Requirements for Title I ESEA Parent Advisory Councils." M. H. Mizell (American Friends Service Committee). "Implementation of Title I Parent Advisory Councils in the Rural South." Papers presented at the 1980 Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association.

impacts on DACs, the presence of someone who coordinated parental involvement activities, and the monitoring of projects by states to see that regulatory requirements were being met.

OUTCOMES

During the Site Study we sought information on two broad classes of consequences of parental involvement activities. First, we looked for outcomes with regard to persons--parents, teachers, and administrators. Second, we inquired about outcomes affecting institutional and educational considerations--effects on the project, on schools, and on the district. Our finding that there was little actual parental participation in project governance was reflected in the data we collected regarding outcomes.

There were two types of positive personal outcomes for parents. First, numerous DAC Chairpersons, and some DAC members, reported that they had achieved personal growth because of their participation. Second, many respondents indicated that DAC members had developed better understandings of Title I and of the local project because of the information provided to the DAC.

Numerically, there were few cases of institutional outcomes associated with DACs. However, those cases were positive, and served to illustrate the effects that DACs can have on projects. Among the DACs that had involvement with decisions about project services or budgets, it was often reported that this involvement made an important contribution to the project. In the Compass District, for instance, we were told that the project offered a number of innovative services (such as computer-assisted instruction, and Parent Effectiveness Training) because the DAC had chosen them in preference to more traditional services. As another example, both project staff members and parents felt that the Johns County DAC had provided advice on the types of services to be offered students, including both the method of service delivery and the timing of it, that had produced an effective project.

On the basis of these outcomes, we believe that there is evidence that an active District Advisory Group, operating at a level where it provides meaningful advice about the project, can have an impact on the project. Further, parents who are members of DACs appear to benefit from their involvement. This finding must be tempered with the observation that the proportion of parents who serve on DACs, among all parents of Title I students, is quite small so these impressive personal findings are not far-reaching.

On the other hand, we encountered next to no negative outcomes from DACs. There were two sites where administrators reported that parents in a governance role took up much of their time and were bothersome. At neither did the DAC play a significant role.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

From a review of our findings regarding District Advisory Councils, we can draw certain conclusions about developing heightened levels of parental participation in decision making. based on the premise that the Federal government and local school districts desire that parents play active roles in the governance of Title I projects, there are actions that could be taken that appear likely to bring about greater degrees of parent participation. While any one of these actions could be important, it is clear that none is the single, dominant factor. That is, the development of more parental involvement with project governance undoubtedly requires that a number of actions take place simultaneously.

In our data, there is at least a suggestion that more precise Federal legislation and regulations could be critical. Enough parents and staff members indicated that the lack of specificity in the Federal mandates created problems to suggest that more precision would be helpful. In particular, the imprecision regarding the role of the DAC was identified as a hinderance. The injunction currently appearing in the regulations is that the DAC is to advise the project staff; the problem lies with the meaning of "advise" and the openness of that term to differing interpretations. As we have seen, there are districts where the interpretation was literal and the DAC was assigned a major role in the decision-making process. But it is equally clear that at some sites the interpretation was that it was sufficient to present information to the DAC and nominally provide an occasion for advisement to occur after such a presentation. Anyone now interested in either facilitating or restricting parental participation in decision making can call upon the regulatory language to support a position.

In a similar vein, state guidelines for Title I appear to play an important role in bringing about more active advisory councils. We found that the three sites at which the DAC played a central role in project decision making were in states where state guidelines existed. However, we also found lesser-involved DACs in states with guidelines. In fact, two of the lesser-involved

DACs were in the same states as two of our most-involved DACs. What we found to be critical was more than the sheer existence of state guidelines, but also an accompanying monitoring role carried out by state Title I personnel to see that the guidelines are implemented. (The more active DACs were thus monitored.)

A Parent Coordinator turned out to be extremely important in the facilitation of parental involvement. We found the most involved District Advisory Councils in districts that had a PC who played a highly supportive role. We also experienced instances of supportive Parent Coordinators in sites characterized by token parent participation in governance. This suggests that a supportive PC is not a sufficient condition for extensive parental involvement; such a PC may not be able to overcome staff or parent attitudes that favor lesser roles for parents. From our examination of Parent Coordinators we conclude that a project can benefit from an active PC who avoids assuming so much of the responsibility for the DAC that the PC comes to dominate the group. When the latter occurs, parents play a significantly reduced role. This calls for a delicate balance of activities, one that we found some Parent Coordinators able to pull off.

Training of District Advisory Councils has received considerable attention from the national Title I office, attention it well deserves. We found a strong relationship between training and level of parental participation in decision making. But the matter is more complex than the simple presence or absence of training. We found numerous sites that offered training to the DAC regarding the Title I program--what its purposes are, how projects are organized, the types of services offered to students, etc.--and that training was frequently no better than no training at all. Instead, associated with higher levels of parental participation in decision making are forms of training that improve DAC members' skills in communication, planning, and decision making. Our findings suggest that DACs should receive training, and that since the most effective training revolves around group processes, such topics should form a central part of training programs.

While we found that the most effective DACs were those whose Chairperson was seen as the most powerful force, to suggest that councils elect strong Chairpersons is pointless. However, it may be useful and relevant for advisory council officers to be provided with training in leadership techniques. Certainly, such training is available, and there are instances of DAC Chairpersons developing into effective leaders as an outgrowth of training. Perhaps state-offered regional workshops in leadership skills is a method for improving DAC officers' capabilities.

It may well be that the most important implication from our data is that the District Advisory Council be given a clear, understood authority over certain important dimensions of a Title I project. While it may not be appropriate to require a particular authority for DACs in Federal or state regulations/ guidelines, it may be possible to require that any Grant Application include specification of an authority role for the advisory council, along with procedures and a timetable for the implementation of the role. We found that all three of the most-involved DACs had such an authority which was known to DAC members and project staff, and was carefully observed. Given the absence of a statement of authority at any of the lesser-involved sites, we are drawn to conclude that an authority statement is very important to DAC success in the decision-making context.

ILLUSTRATIVE CASE STUDIES

In the pages that follow we present three case studies that illustrate levels of District Advisory Council participation in project decision making. They are designed to present an example of each level, so the reader can better see the dynamics involved in DAC participation. However, they should not be viewed as "typical" since every DAC within a category had its own story to tell. The case studies describe briefly the community and the school district, then present a picture of the District Advisory Council with particular concern for the DAC's involvement with project decisions.

The first case study, of Brisbane, illustrates a DAC that had no decision-making participation. The second is of Bonnet County, a DAC with token involvement. An example of a DAC where true advisement went on is the Redlands District. (We do not present a case study of a site at which no DAC existed since there are so few instances in the nation of Title I districts without DACs.)

BRISBANE

(No Involvement)

The Brisbane district was found in a small town in the southwestern portion of the country. The community was 70 percent White with about equal percentages of Blacks and Native Americans. The general socioeconomic status of the two participating schools was middle class.

The Title I project at Brisbane was 14 years old, and the two participating schools had been part of the project for all of the 14 years. The project was funded for over $300,000, which mainly provided pull-out reading instruction to about 25 percent of the student enrollment.

A District Advisory Council was reported to have been in existence for 14 years. There were usually three DAC meetings a year; while the DAC was technically composed of 30 parents and six other persons, meetings were typically atttended by three parents and as many as 15 non-members, mostly Title I teachers. At these meetings project personnel reported on project activities and answered questions, but there was seldom any true discussion of project topics.

Most knowledgeable persons felt that the DAC was formed for the sole purpose of meeting Title I requirements. There were no bylaws and no one was aware of any project goals regarding the DAC. The Title I Project Director saw no value in the DAC, nor did other project personnel; in general they believed that the appropriate role for parents was that of supporters of the school system.

Parent members were obtained through personal invitation from project personnel, followed by the parent volunteering for the DAC. Many parent members reported not hearing about DAC meetings, and many felt that there was so little that they could do on the DAC that attending meetings was a waste of time. While some parent members expressed a desire for a stronger role in the DAC, they had not taken any action to achieve it.

In summary, project personnel were not interested in an active District Advisory Council. Meetings were infrequent and perfunctory (lasting less than an hour) and were characterized by project staff members largely talking to one another since so few parents attended. Having met the requirement for securing a District Advisory Council, Title I personnel exerted no leadership to make the organization work more effectively.

BONNET COUNTY
(Token Involvement)

Bonnet County was in the southeastern region of the country. The district was geographically quite large, encompassing a 50-mile radius and serving many small towns. The county population was of both middle and low socioeconomic status and ethnically was made up of 70 percent Whites and 30 percent Blacks.

The district enrollment was about 60,000 students. Recently desegregated, the district ethnicity mirrored that of the county, as did that of each of the two sample schools. One school, with an enrollment of 650 students, was completely rural and bused students from as much as 20 miles to school. The second school had an enrollment of 450 and was located in a small community where students walked to school. The district had received Title I funds for 14 years; one sample school had been in the project for the full 14 years, the other for two years. The project grant was for over $4 million and the basic design provided student services, on a pull-out basis, at the school level.

Membership on the District Advisory Council was open to all parents who attended meetings. Typically, 60 to 100 parents showed up at meetings, 30 of them regularly. To coordinate activities a nine-member Planning Committee had been formed, composed of six DAC officers and three project staff members. The DAC met five times during the year, at a community recreation center, and meetings lasted for about three hours. The council followed a set of bylaws, which were based on Federal regulations and state guidelines.

Both the DAC Chairperson and Co-Chairperson were former Title I parents whose children had grown beyond the project. They were both politically active, especially in Title I (e.g., they attended state and national meetings and were active in associations of Title I parents). The project design included a number of school-level Parent Coordinators; these persons were very active in the DAC, dominating it and exerting power over its activities.

At meetings there were many occasions when important project topics came up. Generally, the DAC would discuss these matters with the Parent Coordinators taking central roles. The DAC functioned as a forum for discussions of the Title I project, but did not assume an advisement stance.

Overall, the Bonnet County DAC appeared to have adopted its token involvement position because of three factors. The group was controlled by Parent Coordinators (often they were officers), whose attitude was that parents should play a supportive rather than a decision-making role. Second, key parents did not promote an activism role, perhaps because of their own political needs. Finally, and critically, the fluid membership arrangement (with all parents technically members) acted to keep the DAC's attention on orientation to the project and training in Title I.

REDLANDS
(Advisement)

A suburb of a major city in the west, Redlands itself was a fairly large city. Ethnically the district was composed of about 75 percent White and 25 percent mixed Asian, Black, and Hispanic residents. While primarily a middle-class area, there were a number of pockets of poverty; both sample schools were in lower socioeconomic areas. There were almost 40,000 students in the district.

A Title I project had been carried out in the Redlands district for 15 years. One school had participated for 13 years, while the second had been in and out of the project over a ten-year period. The Redlands Title I grant was for almost $450,000, which supported a pull-out instructional program in mathematics and reading.

The District Advisory Council had been in existence for six years. It was composed of nine Title I parents, three non-Title I parents and two community representatives. Eight or nine members attended the monthly meeting. Members were chosen in a districtwide election, after the candidates had volunteered.

The DAC followed bylaws that were developed in 1974 and revised recently. While no formal goals existed, both DAC members and project personnel perceived the DAC's role to be that of monitoring the use of funds. To that end the DAC reviewed and approved the project budget, and budget suggestions were reported to be almost always accepted by the project staff and the Board of Education.

The project's Parent Coordinator helped develop the agenda, communicated with DAC members about meetings, provided information on Title I and the project, and offered various support services to the advisory council. Meetings were run by the DAC Chairperson, who had considerable leadership ability. In addition, the entire DAC received training in group processes and effective leadership from a nearby university, subsidized by the project.

The Redlands District was in a state that had developed its own guidelines concerning Title I, including parental involvement. These guidelines were well known and influenced the actions of both project staff and parents. The state conducted monitoring visits, which provided an impetus for visited districts to stay close to the guidelines.

To summarize, there were identifiable forces that brought the Redlands DAC to the level of involvement we observed. The state guidelines and monitoring set a general direction; administrators and parents saw the advisory council as having responsibility for reviewing seriously the project budget; the Parent Coordinator provided strong support for the DAC; the DAC had received some relevant training; and the Chairperson was an effective leader.

	PLAINS	REDLANDS	COMPASS	STADIUM	JOHNS CO.	SUMMER PLACE	ROLLER	MEADOW LANDS	KING EDWARD	BONNET CO.	MOUNTAIN VIEW	KINGSTOWN	BRISBANE	BENJAMIN CO.	MAPLE	CLETEVILLE
YEARS IN EXISTENCE	5	6	8	10	8	10	10	No Data	8	2	*	10	10	5	6	6
TOTAL SIZE (PARENTS)	140 (100)	19 (13)	111 (95)	78 (72)	45 (37)	15 (10)	26 (24)	27 (14)	28 (22)	All Parents	*	29 (26)	36 (30)	9 (7)	6 (6)	15 (11)
MEETING FREQUENCY	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	4/year	3/year	Monthly	Monthly	5/year	*	Monthly	3/year	3/year	3/year	4/year
PARENT MEMBER ATTENDANCE	40 (40%)	9 (60%)	60 (65%)	36 (50%)	31 (90%)	9 (90%)	16 (66%)	8 (55%)	15 (65%)	30 (?)	*	13 (50%)	5 (15%)	6 (90%)	5 (90%)	9 (75%)
NON-PARENT MEMBERS ATTENDING	15	3	15	4	7	4	2	7	4	No Data	*	2	5	2	0	3
ROLE OF SUBCOMMITTEES	Do not meet	No sub-comms.	Not important	Do minor DAC work	No sub-comms.	No sub-comms.	No sub-comms.	No sub-comms.	Do major DAC work	No sub-comms.	*	No sub-comms.	No sub-comms.	No sub-comms.	No sub-comms.	No sub-comms.
MEETING TIME	Night	Morning, Afternoon, Night	Morning	Morning, Afternoon, Night	Night	Night	Night	Night	Morning	Morning	*	Night	Night	Afternoon	Afternoon	Morning
MEETING LOCATION	Dist. offices	Various schools	Dist. offices	Dist. offices	Community center	Dist. offices	Dist. offices	Dist. offices	Dist. offices	Community center	*	Dist. offices	Dist. offices	Dist. offices	Dist. offices	Dist. offices
MEETING DURATION	1.5-2 hrs	1.5-2 hrs.	3 hrs	2-2.5 hrs	2 hrs	1 hr	1.5-2 hrs	3-4 hrs	2 hrs	3 hrs	*	2 hrs	1 hr	1 hr	1 hr	1.5 hrs.
AGENDA SETTING	Chair. + Staff	Chair. + PC	Chair. + PD	Chair. + PC	Chair.	Chair. + PD, Tchr.	Chair. + PD	PD + PC	PC	Chair. + PC	*	PD	PD	PD	PD	SW
MEETING LEADERSHIP: NOMINAL/ ACTUAL	Chair./ Chair.	Chair./ Chair.	Chair./ Chair.	Chair./ PC	Chair./ Chair.	Chair./ PD	Chair./ PD	Chair./ Chair.	PC/ PC	Chair./ Chair.	*	Chair./ Chair.	PD/ PD	PD/ PD	PD/ PD	Chair./ SW
MINUTES: RECORDER/ DISTRIBUTION	Parent/ All Members	Parent/ All Members	Parent/ All Members	PC/ All Members	No data	Parent/ All Members	Parent/ Files	Parent/ All Members	Parent/ Files	Parent/ Files	*	Parent/ Files	PD/ Files	Parent/ Files	Teacher/ Files	Parent/ All Members

* = No DAC

LEGEND:
STAFF
PD = Project Director
PC = Parent Coordinator
SW = Social Worker
Chair. = DAC Chairperson
Tchr. = Teacher

Table 5-1. DAC Structure and Organization

		PLAINS	REDLANDS	COMPASS	STADIUM	JOHNS CO	SUMMER PLACE	ROLLER	MEADOW LANDS	KING EDWARD	BONNET CO.	MOUNTAIN VIEW	KINGSTOWN	BRISBANE	BENJAMIN CO.	MAPLE	CLETEVILLE
PARENT MEMBERS	% OF TOTAL MEMBERSHIP	65%	75%	80%	90%	80%	65%	90%	50%	80%	90%	*	95%	85%	75%	100%	80%
	AGE 26-30 31-40 41 +	0 67% 33%	15% 70% 15%	10% 75% 15%	10% 60% 30%	No data	No data	No data	No data	15% 65% 20%	No data	*	5% 80% 15%	20% 60% 20%	0 80% 20%	10% 80% 10%	5% 80% 15%
	SEX: % FEMALE	75%	70%	85%	90%	66%	100%	80%	80%	85%	No data	*	75%	85%	55%	100%	75%
	ETHNICITY	B: 50% W: 50%	A: 5% B: 5% H: 5% W: 85%	B: 60% H: 20% W: 20%	B: 60% H: 30% W: 10%	B: 60% H: 20% W: 20%	W: 100%	B: 90% W: 10%	B: 10% H: 30% W: 60%	A: 100%	B: 35% W: 65%	*	H: 90% W: 10%	H: 35% NA: 15% W: 50%	B: 30% W: 70%	W: 100%	W: 100%
	EDUCATION	HS: 70% C: 30%	HS: 80% C: 20%	No data	HS: 60% C: 30% Unk: 10%	No data	HS: 90% C: 10%	No data	No data	< HS: 20% HS: 50% C: 10% Unk: 20%	No data	*	No data	< HS: 10% HS: 60% C: 30%	HS: 55% C: 45%	HS: 100%	< HS: 5% HS: 55% C: 40%
	RECRUITMENT	Announc. to SACs	General announc.	Announc. to SACs	Announc. to schls.	Announc. to SACs	Invited by Chair.	Announc. to schls.	Announc. to SACs	Announc. to SACs	Invited by PCs	*	Announc. to SACs	Invited by PD	Invited by PR	Announc. to SACs	Invited by SW
	SELECTION PROCESS	Elected by SAC	Elected by parents	Elected by SAC	Apptd. by PR	Elected by SAC	Volunteer	Elected by PTA	Elected by SAC	Elected by SAC	Volunteer	*	Elected by SAC	Volunteer	Elected by PTA	Elected by SAC	Elected by parents
NON-PARENT MEMBERS	STAFF AS DAC MEMBERS	35%	0	10%	10%	20%	35%	10%	40%	20%	10%	*	5%	15%	25%	0	0
	NON-PARENT GROUPS REPRESENTED	Tchrs, Admins.	Community	Tchrs., Admins., Community	Tchrs., Admins.	Tchrs., Admins.	Tchrs., Admins.	Tchrs.	Tchrs., Admins., Community	Tchrs., Admins.	Tchrs., Admins.	*	Tchrs.,	Tchrs.,	Tchrs., Admins.	0	Community
	SELECTION PROCESS	No data	Volunteer	Apptd. by groups	Apptd. by PR	Volunteer	Automatic	Volunteer	Volunteer	Elected by SAC	Volunteer	*	Volunteer	Volunteer	Volunteer	Not applicable	Elected by parents

* = No DAC
SAC = School Advisory Committee

LEGEND:

ETHNICITY
- A = Asian
- B = Black
- H = Hispanic
- NA = Native American
- W = White

EDUCATION
- <HS = Less than high school
- HS = High school graduate
- C = Some college

STAFF
- PD = Project Director
- PC = Parent Coordinator
- PR = Principal
- Tchr = Teachers
- Admins = District Administrators
- SW = Social Worker

Table 5-2. DAC Membership and Selection

		PLAINS	REDLANDS	COMPASS	STADIUM	JOHNS CO.	SUMMER PLACE	ROLLER	MEADOW-LANDS	KING EDWARD	BONNET CO.	MOUNTAIN VIEW	KINGSTOWN	BRISBANE	BENJAMIN CO.	MAPLE	CLETEVILLE
INTRA-DAC COMMUNICATION		Newsletter Minutes	Minutes	Minutes Memos Informal	Newsletter Minutes Memos	Minutes	Minutes	Only at meetings	Minutes	Memos Informal	Information	*	Informal	Minutes	Memos	Only at meetings	Minutes
DAC COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS, SCHOOLS, COMMUNITY		None	None	Through representatives	None	Newsletter Memos Media	Media	None	None	Memos	Newsletter Media	*	None	Media	None	Newsletter	None
DAC TRAINING	NO. SESSIONS	3/yr.	2/yr.	1/yr.	1/yr.	3/yr.	None	2/yr.	None	4/yr.	3/yr.	*	None	None	None	1/yr.	None
	ATTENDEES	Most members	Most members	Most members	Some members	Many parents	–	Some members	–	Many members	Many parents		–	–	–	Most members	–
	WHO CONDUCTED	No data	Univ., PC	Nat'l. org.	PC	PC	–	PD	–	State	State		–	–	–	PD	–
	TOPICS	Group process	Group process, Title I	Group process	Group process	Group process, Title I	–	Title I	–	Title I	Title I		–	–	–	Title I	–
OTHER PROGRAMMATIC SUPPORT		Travel reim. Clerical services	Regs. Other docs. Clerical services	Travel reim. Clerical services	Regs. Other docs. Clerical services	Regs. Other docs.	Regs. Clerical services	Regs.	No data	Regs. Other docs. Travel reim.	Regs. Other docs. Clerical services	*	Regs. Travel reim.	None	Regs. Clerical services	Clerical services	Regs. Other docs.

* = No DAC

LEGEND:

STAFF
- PD = Project Director
- PC = Parent Coordinator
- Chair. = PAC Chairperson

PROGRAM SUPPORT
- Travel reim. = Travel Reimbursement
- Reg = Regulations
- Other docs = Other Documents

Table 5-3. DAC Support Features

	PLAINS	REDLANDS	COMPASS	STADIUM	JOHNS CO.	SUMMER PLACE	ROLLER	MEADOW-LANDS	KING EDWARD	BONNET CO.	MOUNTAIN VIEW	KINGSTOWN	BRISBANE	BENJAMIN CO.	MAPLE	CLETEVILLE
FORMALIZED DAC ROLE/SOURCE	Advise, liaison/ Bylaws	None	Advise/ Bylaws	Advise, rec. info./ Proj. dosc.	Advise/ Bylaws	Advise, rec. info./ Proj. docs.	Advise, liaison rec. info./ Bylaws	Advise/ Bylaws	Advise, liaison rec./info. Bylaws	Advise/ Bylaws	*	Advise, liaison/ Bylaws	None	Advise, liaison/ Bylaws	None	Advise, liaison/ Bylaws
DECISION AREAS CONSIDERED BY DAC	Proposal Services Budget	Proposal Budget	Proposal Services	Proposal Services Person-nel	Proposal Services Budget	Budget	None	Services Budget	None	Proposal Services	*	Proposal	None	None	None	Services
LEVEL OF INVOLVEMENT	Token	Advise/ Decide	Advise/ Decide	Token	Advise/ Decide	None	None	None	None	Token	*	Token	None	None	None	Token
POWERFUL PERSONS	PD, Chair.	Chair., PD	Chair.	PC	Chair.	PD	PD	None	PC	Chair., PC	*	PD	PD	PD	PD	SW
NON-DECISION DAC ACTIVITIES	Sponsor conference Disseminate information	Strengthen DAC	Attend confer-ences Participate in city politics	Strengthen DAC	Attend confer-ences Coordi-nate SACs	Hear reports	Strengthen DAC	Monitor schools	Sponsor parent educa-tion	Attend confer-ences Monitor school	*	Sponsor social events	Hear reports	Discuss education	Discuss educa-tion	Discuss education
PERCEIVED VALUE OF DAC	Members learn about project	Monitor budget	Select project services	Members learn about project	Determine some services	Members learn about project	Members learn about project	Members learn about project	Plan parent activities	Avenue for parent partici-pation	*	Meets federal mandate	Meets federal mandate	Members learn about project	Support for project	Meets federal mandate

* = No DAC

LEGEND:

POWERFUL PERSONS
- PD = Project Director
- SW = Social Worker
- PC = Parent Coordinator
- Chair = DAC Chairperson

FORMALIZED ROLE/SOURCE
- Rec. Info. = Receive information
- Proj. Docs. = Project documents

Table 5-4. DAC Functioning

	NO DAC	NO INVOLVEMENT							TOKEN INVOLVEMENT					ADVISE/DECIDE INVOLVEMENT		
	MT. VIEW	ROLLER	KING EDWARD	BRISBANE	BENJAMIN CO.	MAPLE	SUMMER PLACE	MEADOW-LANDS	PLAINS	STADIUM	BONNET CO.	KINGS-TOWN	CLETE-VILLE	REDLANDS	COMPASS	JOHNS CO.
STATE GUIDELINES EXIST, ARE IMPLEMENTED			✓					✓			✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
DAC HAS SPECIFIED AUTHORITY														✓	✓	✓
PARENT COORDINATOR (PC) ROLE	○	○	◒	○	○	○	○	●	●	◒	◒	●	◒	●	●	●
STAFF ATTITUDE: PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT = SUPPORT	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓			✓	✓				
PARENT ATTITUDE: SATISFIED WITH PROJECT/ PROFESSIONAL MAKE DECISIONS	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓			
DECISIONS RESERVED FOR HIGH-LEVEL ADMINISTRATORS		✓	✓			✓			✓			✓	✓			
DAC TRAINING		◒	◒	□	□	◒	□	□	■	■	◒	□	□	■+	■	■+
POWERFUL PERSON		△	△	△	△	△	△		▲	△	▲	△	△	▲	▲	▲

✓ = condition exists

LEGEND:

PC ROLE
- ○ = No PC
- ◒ = PC dominates DAC
- ● = PC supports DAC

DAC TRAINING
- □ = None
- ◒ = Title I
- ■ = Group Processes
- ■+ = Group Processes + Title I

POWERFUL PERSON
- △ = Professional
- ▲ = Shared, Parent and Professional
- ▲ = Parent

Table 5-5. Major Contributory Factors

CHAPTER 6
PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN THE SCHOOL-LEVEL GOVERNANCE OF TITLE I

I. INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter described the participation of parents in project governance at the district level. This chapter continues the exploration of the governance function in Title I by examining parents and governance at the school level.

As was the case at the district level, where we found that parents participated in district governance only by means of District Advisory Councils, we found that parents participated in school-level project governance only through School Advisory Councils. That is, we uncovered no instances where

parents had a role in school decision making as members of other groups,* or where individual parents had significant impact on school decision making. Therefore, this chapter will describe the governance role of SACs exclusively.

The Title I program has required school advisory groups since 1974. The regulations in effect during our study indicated the following regarding School Advisory Councils:

- The majority of members were to be parents of children currently being served or to be served by the Title I project.
- Members were to be selected by parents in the school attendance area.
- The SAC was to be given responsibility for advising the local educational agency in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of the project.
- The SAC was to be provided with information concerning the project.
- The SAC was to operate under procedures insuring timely and proper performance of its functions.
- The SAC was to be provided with procedures for coordinating its functions and recommendations with those of other councils.
- If an LEA has either less than 1000 students enrolled in project schools, or has only one project school, it was possible for the District Advisory Council to also serve as the SAC.

*There were instances where other school-level groups existed, either of the PTA sort or as advisory groups for state projects. However, such groups were either synonymous with the SAC (having the same membership) or never took up matters concerning Title I.

- State educational agencies were to determine that SAC members receive appropriate training materials and orientation to carry out their functions.

SUMMARY OF MAJOR FINDINGS

Two major findings emerged from our examination of School Advisory Councils. They are summarized below and are discussed at greater length throughout the chapter.

- Parents played a minor role in the governance of Title I projects as members of School Advisory Councils. Few SACs were actively involved with the making of decisions about a school's project activities.

- There were wide variations in the way School Advisory Councils were implemented. We were able to identify six varieties, ranging from locations where no SAC existed to examples of SACs that had critical involvement with important project decisions.

II. PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN TITLE I SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCILS

When we began this Site Study phase of our project, we had chosen 16 districts and two schools in each district for examination. Due to conditions over which we had no control, one school was lost, so our sample of schools became 31. Once our data were collected, we determined that there were three types of districts for which it would be inappropriate to provide school advisory group information. These three types are described below, along with the districts involved.

No School Advisory Councils

There were two districts where SACs did not exist, Mountain View and Brisbane. In the Mountain View district there was no District Advisory Council (as noted in Chapter 5) and the same reasons were given for the lack of School Advisory Councils: all efforts to recruit parents had been unsuccessful. The Brisbane District, on the other hand, had not formed school councils because the project personnel had not felt them to be important and did not devote any energies to developing them.

Paper Councils

During the year of the Site Study the Stadium District formed SACs by converting existing parent organizations into Title I councils. However, many parents in the parent organizations at the two sample schools did not know of this conversion, and the two councils never met. Thus, we did not believe these councils warranted any further attention.

Councils with Few Meetings

We found three districts (Roller, Benjamin County, and Maple) where SACs had been formed, but met very seldom. At both Roller and Benjamin County one SAC met once and one twice; at Maple each council met but once during the year. Our conclusion was that an advisory group that met so seldom could not play

any meaningful role in project governance, and we eliminated them from further consideration.

In the remainder of this chapter we present information on 18 SACs in ten districts. The data are contained in two tables, one concerned with SAC organization and membership, the second with SAC support and functioning. For each table, we have highlighted the most significant findings in the text. The presentation of the ten districts in the tables has the larger districts at the left and the smaller districts to the right. (The letters under the district pseudonym are the initial letters of school pseudonyms.)

ORGANIZATION AND MEMBERSHIP

In Table 6-1, information regarding the organization of SACs is shown first, and information on membership follows. While the reader can examine the table and discern items of interest, we found four findings to be particularly important.

In most cases, parents played a secondary role in SACs to school staff members. Agendas for SAC meetings were set exclusively by professionals at the majority of schools, and in almost every case the actual leadership during meetings was assumed by a professional. Notably, the principal typically was central to decisions on when to hold a meeting, what to take up at the meeting, and the conduct of the meeting.

More than half of the SACs had an open membership policy, meaning either that all parents were considered members of the group or that any parent who attended a SAC meeting was a member. Despite this philosophy, attendance at meetings in those schools was quite low. Among the ten schools having an open membership policy only four (in the King Edward and Kingstown Districts) had a high level of parent attendance. At the other six schools in this set, as well as at schools with a limited membership, parents often said that low attendance was due to their feeling that the advisory group was not important.

At each of the schools for which we had information, persons other than parents attended SAC meetings. Almost universally, these other persons were school personnel such as principals, Title I teachers, Parent Coordinators, counselors, or Social Workers. In only one case (Meadowlands) did we find community members attending SAC meetings. For most SACs, then, a meeting would be attended by parent members and some school staff members who may or may not have been considered members.

Finally, a general examination of the information in Table 6-1 reveals that there were clear variations in SACs both across and within sites. That is, SACs differed from one district to another, which would be expected, and also SACs within districts had somewhat different structures. While the variability from district to district was most pronounced, there were examples of differences between schools in the same district. From this table it was possible to identify districts in which schools had considerable autonomy in setting up and operating SACs (Plains, Redlands, and Compass) and districts that appeared to be implementing a common plan for all SACs (Johns County, Summer Place, King Edward, Bonnet County, and Kingstown).

SUPPORT AND FUNCTIONING

Table 6-2 displays information on two variables related to support for the school advisory group, and four variables concerned with the group's functioning. Important findings in this table are described below.

We found three levels of School Advisory Council involvement with project decision making: none, meaning the SAC had no participation at all in project decisions because important project topics never came before the group; token, meaning that the SAC devoted some attention to project topics, but there were no recognizable outcomes showing influence on the part of the SAC; and advisement, meaning the SAC took up important topics, and the results of SAC deliberations/recommendations affected the design and/or implementation of the school project.

As can be seen in the table, ten of 18 school advisory groups did not have any participation in project governance. We found five SACs that had token participation. And there were three SACs that had a major role in school project governance. Of special interest regarding the three SACs fitting in the true advisement category was that (1) only one of the two Redlands SACs reached the major involvement level, indicating the within-district variability mentioned earlier; and (2) all three were in districts where the District Advisory Council played a major role in project decision making. (Tangentially, the third district where we found a very active DAC, Compass, did not have active SACs. Compass SACs met only three times a year and had token involvement only.)

The data presented in Table 6-2 verify what was described earlier regarding the importance of school personnel in the operation of SACs. Through a variety of sources we found that the most powerful person at every SAC except one was a professional staff member. At one school in the Plains district we found a Chairperson who was the most powerful individual; despite this, that SAC had token involvement with decision making, characterized by infrequent meetings (i.e., SAC met only twice during the year) which resulted in insufficient occasions for developing high-level involvement.

A third finding was that there was a variety of non-decision-making activities in which SACs engaged. In six cases the SAC was involved with parent education, and in four cases the SAC took on some sort of school support activity. Many of these non-decision-making activities are described in Chapter 8, Other Forms of Parental Involvement.

A last finding in Table 6-2 is that most of the actions taken by SACs were not known to their schools and parents in general because no mechanism existed for communication. Two thirds of the SACs had no way of communicating with the school or parents. Among the one third that did have a means of communication, three used the school newsletter, two sent notes home with children, and one sent SAC minutes to all Title I parents.

III. DISCUSSION: CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES

Earlier we presented two major findings from our investigation of School Advisory Councils. First, we found that (as members of SACs) parents played a minor role in the governance of school projects. Second, we found that there were great variations in the manner in which SACs were implemented; specifically, we identified six levels of SAC participation in project governance. In this section we describe the reasons that appear to underlie our findings, and what we discovered about the outcomes of parental participation in governance.

PARENTS PLAYED A MINOR ROLE IN SCHOOL PROJECT GOVERNANCE

In our study we looked at 31 elementary schools in 16 districts. Within those 31 schools we saw that only three had a School Advisory Council that played a major role in project governance. Beyond that, we found the following: five schools where the SAC played a token role, ten schools where the SAC did not take up important project matters, six schools where the SAC met so seldom there was no opportunity for a governance role, and six schools where either the SAC existed only on paper and never met or else no SAC had ever been formed.

The focus of our analysis regarding the SAC's role in decision making was on the three schools where the SAC had a meaningful involvement in decision making. We noted two factors that seemed to contribute to this level of parent participation in governance. First, the schools were in districts at which the District Advisory Council was also a major factor in project decision making. It appears that, in cases where the district environment was open to parental participation in decision making, there was a filtering down of this attitude to schools and some active encouragement of strong roles for SACs in decision making by district and project personnel. The ambience in these districts seemed to have created a positive context for SAC activities.

But the district philosophy and actions were not sufficient; we also had a site with an active DAC in which SACs were not very active. At the school level another factor appeared to be needed, a person who strongly promoted an activist role for the SAC. At the two schools in the Johns County District the key actors were Parent Coordinators. These persons were part of a network that flowed throughout the site--from the district level through the intermediate level to the school level--a network of positive attitudes toward parental participation in governance. As part of this network the school Parent Coordinators took vigorous actions to develop SACs that had some degree of active involvement with school project decisions. Our other school with a strong SAC seemed to be the result of a principal who was positively inclined toward parent involvement in governance and who fostered such activity on the part of the SAC.

In summary, we feel that the most active School Advisory Councils occurred because the environment within the district was inclined toward parent activism, and a key individual at the school took a leadership position to bring it about.

THERE WERE MANY LEVELS OF SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCILS

Besides our observations on the factors that contributed to maximum parental participation in decision making, we were not able to identify factors that systematically distinguished among different levels of School Advisory Councils. That is, we could not clearly specify why some districts had no SACs, or why some SACs met very infrequently, or why some SACs that met had only minor involvement with project decisions. These 28 SACs shared one characteristic--there was no one at the school who actively promoted a role for parents in decision making--but otherwise there were no variables we examined that clearly pointed to why they took on their varying aspects.

Scattered pieces of information allowed us to speculate on some of the reasons for SAC variability. Among the sites where SACs had been formed but met very seldom, we found some evidence that project staff members formed the SACs because there was a mandate for them but had no enthusiasm for going beyond

the sheer meeting of the mandated requirement. We also noted at these schools an attitude on the part of some parents that the project was being operated satisfactorily and that there was no pressing reason for parents to take an active governance role.

Further speculative observations were that at schools where the advisory group met without taking up project business, there was frequently the attitude that parental involvement should be limited to support for the school and/or project with the parallel attitude that parents did not have a place in the decision-making process. Accordingly, such SACs simply did not ever deal with topics concerning the project's services, personnel, or budget.

OUTCOMES

Personal benefits for parents who participated in School Advisory Councils were the most frequent outcomes cited by respondents at the study sites. Generally, parents who attended SAC meetings indicated that they had acquired information about the project and the school, and thereby felt themselves better informed. Some parent SAC members also indicated that participation in the advisory group had increased their confidence when interacting with school personnel.

In a similar fashion, a few staff members noted that the presence of SACs had improved their relations with parents. Such reports were restricted to teachers and administrators who attended SAC meetings, which was a minority among staff members.

Previously we pointed out that there were only three schools at which the SAC had realized a major role in project decision making. At those schools it was apparent that the SAC was quite influential, and had made significant inputs to the planning and implementation of Title I services. In each case the SAC had been consulted about the project's Grant Application, and had made recommendations that were reported to have improved the services offered to students. To illustrate how a School Advisory Council can have influence on a project, we present a case study of one council subsequently.

Anderson School was in an inner-city area of a large southeastern city. There were over 500 students in this neighborhood school; students walked to school. The student population was 85 percent Black and 15 percent White, and the faculty ethnicity was quite similar. Most students qualified for free lunch.

Anderson had been part of the district's Title I project for 15 years. The School Advisory Council had existed for eight years. SAC membership was of a fluid nature, in that all parents were considered eligible and any parent who attended a meeting had a voice in the proceedings. Formally, however, there were 24 members. All members were appointed by the Parent Coordinator, who identified parents who attended and appeared interested and asked them to participate. Similarly, the PC chose the SAC officers, again by selecting parents who appeared particularly interested in the SAC.

The SAC met five times per year, at the school, for 90 minutes. Written meeting notices were sent home to parents, but the most important method of getting parents to meetings was by personal contact, especially by the PC. Meetings usually were attended by around 20 parents, six to eight of whom were regulars and were considered members. The PC, principal, and two teachers also typically attended. The Chairperson assumed some meeting leadership, but the position was largely honorary with the Coordinator dominating the proceedings.

Despite the minimal role played by the Chairperson, and the fluidity of the membership, Anderson's SAC had a major part in the school's Title I project. The Chairperson had to sign off on the proposal and budget before they could be submitted to the district, and this annual process allowed the SAC to have input into the nature of services offered to students. In addition, at Anderson there were paid aides funded by Title I, and the SAC reviewed and approved the choices for aide positions. Most staff members and informed parents felt that the SAC was influential, and that the SAC had contributed to the development of the school project.

Three factors seemed to have made important contributions to the level of involvement found for the Anderson SAC. First, the Parent Coordinator (a paraprofessional) was a strong believer in parental involvement, and devoted much time and energy to obtaining SAC members, getting members out to meetings, and bringing important matters before the group. Second, a small cadre of parents were vocally anxious to see that the school's Title I project came under the scrutiny of the SAC; these parents took steps to involve the SAC in the school's Title I activities. Third, the SAC received frequent training from the PC, some of which was devoted to Title I but most of which dealt with ways of improving the functioning of the group itself.

Figure 6-1. Illustrative Case of SAC Advise/Decide Involvement: Anderson School-Johns County District

IV. CONCLUSIONS

Congress has mandated advisory councils at schools participating in the Title I program. If Congress, the Education Department, and local school administrators wish such advisory councils to have importance in project governance at the school level, there are actions that our findings suggest.

First, it appears necessary to clarify the role to be played by School Advisory Councils. The current legislation, and regulations, call for the SAC to advise the project staff regarding the planning, implementation, and evaluation of the project. However, the language of the legislation and the regulations are sufficiently vague that almost any form can be taken by a SAC and still be considered consistent with that language. More precision--in either the legislation or the regulations--would result in a definition of advisement that could lead to higher levels of parental participation in decision making.

A second conclusion that emerges from our study is that someone at a school is needed to provide leadership for the development of a vigorous SAC. Without school-level leadership, SACs were found to have minor involvement with decision making at best, and more often had no part to play in project governance. We found both a principal and Parent Coordinators in such leadership positions, and we feel that PCs can serve as leaders only if the principal approves. Thus, our data suggest that districts either assign to Title I schools principals who have an interest in developing SACs with decision-making capabilities, or provide principals with encouragement and training so that they can assume leadership in bringing about active SACs.

Finally, we noted that the most active SACs were found in districts where there were also active District Advisory Councils, and we concluded that this reflected an overall district attitude favorable toward parental participation in governance. The realization of that attitude was treated indirectly in the last chapter, where a number of our conclusions regarding SACs could lead to a positive attitude among district and project personnel toward parents in the governance role.

	PLAINS		REDLANDS		COMPASS		JOHNS CO.		SUMMER PLACE		MEADOW-LANDS*	KING EDWARD		BONNET CO.		KINGSTOWN@		CLETEVILLE #
	T	G	W	H	P	S	B	A	C	E	A	C	T	F	D	M	V	D
YEARS IN EXISTENCE	4	4	3	No Data	6	6	8	8	4	4	6	3	1	5	2	7	4	7
MEETING FREQUENCY	4/Yr.	2/Yr.	Monthly	Monthly	3/Yr.	3/Yr.	5/Yr.	5/Yr.	3/Yr.	3/Yr.	4/Yr.	Monthly	4/Yr.	5/Yr.	5/Yr.	Monthly	Monthly	3/Yr.
MEETING DURATION	1.5 hrs.	2 hrs.	1 hr.	1.5 hrs.	2 hrs.	2 hrs.	1 hr.	1.5 hr.	1 hr.	1 hr.	2.5 hrs.	2 hrs.	2 hrs.	1.5 hrs.	1.5 hrs.	2 hrs.	2 hrs.	1.5 hrs.
AGENDA SETTING	PR, Tchr.	Parent	PR, PC	No Data	Chair., PR	Chair., PR	PR, PC	PC	PR	PR	Chair.	PC	PC	PC	PC	Chair., PR	Chair.	SW
LEADERSHIP: NOMINAL/ ACTUAL	Chair./ PR	Chair./ Chair.	PC/ PC	Chair./ Tchr.	Chair./ PR	Chair./ PR	Chair./ PC	Chair./ PC	PR/ PR	PR/ PR	Chair./ Chair.	Chair./ PC	Chair./ PC	Chair./ PC	Chair./ PC	Chair./ Chair.	Chair./ Chair.	Chair./ SW
MINUTES: RECORDER/ DISTRIBUTION	Parent/ PR	Parent/ Members	PC/ Files	No Data	Parent/ Files	Parent/ Files	Parent/ Files	Parent/ Files	PR/ Files	PR/ Files	Parent/ Files	PC/ Files	PC/ Files	Parent/ Files	Parent/ Files	Parent/ Chair., PR	Parent/ Chair., PR	Parent/ All Parents
SIZE	14	10	9	15	12	9	All Parents	All Parents	All Parents	All Parents	17	All Parents	All Parents	All Parents	All Parents	All Parents	All Parents	4
ATTENDANCE: PARENTS/ NON-PARENTS	12/2	5/3	5/2	No Data	6/2	5/2	4/2	6/2	8/1	8/1	3/12	30/2	30/2	6/1	10/1	20/3	30/6	3/1
PARENTS' SELECTION PROCESS	Vol.	Elect.	Elect.	No Data	Appt.	Vol.	Vol.	Vol.	Vol.	Vol.	Vol.	Vol.	Vol.	Vol.	Vol.	Vol.	Vol.	Vol.
NON-PARENT GROUPS REPRESENTED	Admin., Tchrs.	Admin., Tchrs.	Admin., Tchrs.	No Data	Admin., PC	Admin., PC	Admin. PC	Admin., PC	Admin.	Admin.	Admin., Tchrs., Community	Admin.	Admin.	PC	PC	Tchr., Aides	Tchrs., Aides	SW
NON-PARENT SELECTION PROCESS	Vol.	Vol.	Vol.	No Data	Auto.	Auto.	Auto.	Auto.	Vol.	Vol.	Vol.	Vol.	Vol.	Auto.	Auto.	Vol.	Vol.	Auto

*Only 1 school studied
@Kindergarten parents only.
#Only 1 school with SAC.

LEGEND:

STAFF
- PC = Parent Coordinator
- Admin = School Administrators
- SW = Social Worker
- Tchr = Title I teacher
- Chair = SAC Chairperson
- PR = Principal

SELECTION
- Vol = Volunteered
- Elect = Elected
- Auto = Automatic
- Appt = Appointed

Table 6-1. SAC Organization and Membership

	PLAINS		REDLANDS		COMPASS		JOHNS CO.		SUMMER PLACE		MEADOW-LANDS*	KING EDWARD		BONNET CO.		KINGSTOWN@		CLETEVILLE #
	T	G	W	H	P	S	B	A	C	E	A	C	T	F	D	M	V	D
COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS & SCHOOL	Notes home	Notes home	None	None	None	None	None	None	None	None	Newsletter	None	None	News-letter	News-letter	None	None	Minutes
TRAINING	Title I	Title I	Group Process	Group Process	Title I	Title I	Group Process	Group Process	None	None	None	Title I	Title I	Group Process	Group Process	None	None	None
DECISION AREAS	None	None	Proposal, Budget	Proposal, Budget	Services	Services	Proposal, Budget	Proposal, Budget	None	None	Budget	None	None	None	None	None	None	Proposal
LEVEL OF INVOLVEMENT	None	None	Advise	Token	Token	Token	Advise	Advise	None	None	Token	None	None	None	None	None	None	Token
POWERFUL PERSONS	PR	Chair.	PR, PC	Tchr.	PR	PR	PC	PC	PR	PR	PR	PC	PC	PC	PC	None	None	SW
NON-DECISION ACTIVITIES	Receive information	Receive information	Monitor project	Receive information	School support	School support	Parent education	Parent education	Receive information	Receive information	Receive information	Parent education	Parent education	Receive information	Parent education	Parent education School support	School support	Receive information

*Only 1 school studied.
@Kindergarten parents only.
#Only 1 school with SAC.

LEGEND:
POWERFUL PERSONS

PC = Parent Coordinator
PR = Principal
Tchr = Title I teacher
SW = Social Worker

Table 6-2. SAC Support and Functioning

CHAPTER 7

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN THE INSTRUCTIONAL PROCESS OF TITLE I

I. INTRODUCTION

The central purpose for the Title I program is to improve the academic achievement of participating students, particularly in the basic skills of language arts, reading, and mathematics. Given this, local projects devote most of their Title I resources to the instructional process.

At least in theory, parents can be a part of the Title I instructional process. Attempts to describe the mechanisms by which parents can participate in education have included involvement with instruction as one form. For instance, Stearns and Peterson* wrote about three roles for parents, two of

*Stearns, M. S. and S. M. Peterson. "Parental Roles and Underlying Models in Compensatory Education Programs." In Parent Involvement in Compensatory Education Programs. Menlo Park, CA.: Stanford Research Institute, 1973.

which were as tutors of their own children and as paid employees; Gordon* described six parent roles including classroom volunteer, teacher of their own children, and paraprofessional.

Similarly, the conceptual framework for the Study of Parental Involvement spelled out an educational function that encompassed three types of activities for parents: working as paid paraprofessionals, volunteering for classroom instruction, and tutoring their own children at home. Through direct involvement with instruction, we saw a variety of ways parents could affect a Title I project. For instance, an increase in the number of adults delivering instruction to students provides avenues for increasing the degree of individualization. Further, because of their special knowledge about the students participating in a Title I project, parents can offer insights into potentially effective instructional strategies. In addition, parents acquiring information about a project's offerings can participate more meaningfully in decisions about schoolwide or classroom instruction. During the Site Study, our approach to studying the educational function was intended to be quite broad. We wanted to know the ways in which parents participated in Title I project instruction--as paid paraprofessionals, classroom volunteers, and home tutors; how they came to fulfill such roles, and what results their efforts produced. We also investigated the extent to which parents were involved with the process of making decisions about instruction for the project, the school, and the classroom. This chapter describes what we learned.

PLAN FOR THE CHAPTER

There are five sections to this chapter. The rest of the first section summarizes the Title I regulations as they concern parents in the instructional process, then provides an overview of major findings. In Sections II,

*I. J. Gordon, et al. "Aspects of Parent Involvement in the Parent Education Follow Through Program." Paper presented at the 1979 meeting of the American Educational Research Association.

III, and IV we present our findings regarding parents as paid aides, volunteers, and home tutors respectively. Finally, Section V contains recommendations concerning parents and the educational function.

EDUCATION IN TITLE I REGULATIONS

The Title I regulations in effect at the time of the Site Study did not have much to say regarding parents participating in the instructional process. The only mention of paid aides addressed their training, saying that aides were to be trained along with the professional staff they were to assist. The regulations did not, as with other Federal programs, include a specification that parents were to be given priority for aide positions. (On the other hand, the regulations did not prohibit the hiring of parents as aides.) Regarding volunteers, the only mention in the regulations was that Title I funds could be used to reimburse volunteers for expenses associated with their duties, and that volunteers could receive training supported by Title I funds. The regulations were completely silent regarding the tutoring of students by their own parents.

In general, then, Title I regulations did not require that projects hire parents as aides, or use parents as instructional volunteers, or include a home tutoring program. The regulations also did not preclude a project from incorporating any of these provisions in its design.

SUMMARY OF MAJOR FINDINGS

As a result of our investigation of parents and their participation in the instructional process in Title I projects, the following major findings emerged:

- Parents were part of the instructional process as paid aides at 75 percent of the sites, despite the lack of a mandate in Title I legislation and regulations.

- Projects did not consider parent aides to be parental involvement. There were few formal policies to hire parents as aides, parent and non-parent aides were treated identically, and Parent Coordinators and School Advisory Councils were not active in the aide component of projects.

- Parent aides were an integral part of teaching in Title I classrooms.

- Parent aides did not have input into decisions concerning project or school instruction and, in few cases, were included in decisions about classroom instruction.

- There were no instructional volunteer programs as part of Title I projects at the 16 sites.

- Only two sites had formal home tutoring programs, as part of their Title I projects.

Further details of these major findings are found in subsequent portions of this chapter. In addition, a number of secondary findings regarding the educational function in parental involvement are described. In general, we have followed the approach of presenting information by way of tables, and have identified in the text only secondary findings that seem to bear on the major findings. The reader is encouraged to examine the various tables for additional findings that may be of particular interest.

II. PARENTS AS PAID PARAPROFESSIONALS

Out of the 16 sites included in the Site Study, 12 had parents serving as paid paraprofessionals in classrooms. The remaining four sites either hired only certificated persons as aides (and these persons were not parents of students in district schools) or did not have aides in their Title I projects. Across the 12 sites with parent aides, we found a total of 118 aides, 69 of whom (58%) were parents--although not all 69 were parents of Title I students.

PROJECT INTENTIONS/PARENT OPPORTUNITIES

Of particular interest was the matter of intentionality: did projects intend specifically to hire parents for aide positions? Of related concern was the procedure followed at a site to recruit, hire, and assign aides; we felt that such information would cast light on the opportunities parents had to obtain aide positions within projects. Table 7-1 presents information bearing on these two matters.

We found that only one district (Johns County) had a formal policy of giving preference to parents for aide positions. One other district (King Edward), while not giving preference to parents, did specifically encourage parents to apply for such positions. Johns County's policy preferring parents resulted in nine of the 13 positions being filled by parents, while King Edward's informal encouragement resulted in three parents among the nine aides. (Note also, in Table 7-1, that, while Redlands, Brisbane, and Mountain View did not formally prefer parents for paid paraprofessional positions, in each case all aides were parents.)

Looking across the data in Table 7-1, we concluded that the methods used to recruit and hire aides tended to favor the employment of parents. Through an informal, word-of-mouth network parents were likely to have heard about available positions from persons connected with schools (e.g., principals, Title I teachers, advisory group members, or aides). Further, parents were

likely to have been remembered by school personnel because they had devoted time to the school previously and the staff was familiar with them.

Principals were particularly important in the recruitment and selection of aides. Even though potential applicants had to apply at the district office and go through a standard screening process, the principal's recommendation weighed heavily in the final selection. We saw that principals could recruit people whom they knew through prior activities and could influence the final selection by making recommendations or actually making the choice. In this way, many of the aide positions were filled by parents.

Of interest in Table 7-1 is the absence of parents, either individually or as members of School Advisory Councils, in the hiring process.

When it came to the assignment of aides, we found the following pattern: aides were assigned to schools by the district personnel office based on recommendations from principals and Title I teachers, and principals played the major role in assigning aides to specific classrooms.

CHARACTERISTICS OF PAID PARENT PARAPROFESSIONALS

Details about the 69 parent aides are displayed in Table 7-2. There were no secondary findings from this table that helped in the understanding of our major findings.

STRUCTURE AND ORGANIZATION

In Table 7-3 we show information concerning the structure and organization of the paid paraprofessional component in the 12 sites. Material in this table revealed that parent aides and non-parent aides were treated in the same fashion. At none of the 12 sites did we find a distinction made between the two categories of aides. This means that in the Johns County District, where there was a policy of giving preference to parent candidates for positions,

and in the King Edward District, where parents were actively encouraged to apply for positions, parents and non-parents went through the same employment process and were utilized in the same way in classrooms.

Another secondary finding embedded in Table 7-3 was that many project staff members and school personnel were actively involved with the aide component. The multiplicity of important persons concerned with aides undoubtedly contributed to our earlier-cited observation that parents heard about aide openings through an informal network. It is noteworthy that School Advisory Councils were not included among those who influenced the aide component.

FUNCTIONING OF PAID PARAPROFESSIONALS

When examining the roles and responsibilities of parent aides, we were concerned with two central aspects. First, we looked at the particular activities engaged in by aides; second, we addressed the participation of aides in the process of making decisions about instruction. Information related to these two areas is contained in Table 7-4.

At all of the 12 sites, we found that parent aides had some form of involvement with instruction. Further, we found considerable variability in the activities performed by parent aides, from sites where but one type was undertaken (Summer Place and Meadowlands) to sites where five or six instruction-related activities went on (Bonnet County, Plains, and Roller). Of particular interest was the observation that at ten sites parent aides were performing some direct teaching--presenting new concepts or reinforcing skills taught by the teacher--which meant that they were acting as second teachers.

The other important finding embedded in Table 7-4 was that parent aides had little to do with the instructional decision-making process. We uncovered no sites where aides were involved (as members of curricular committees, for instance) with decisions on a project-wide or school-wide basis. All such decisions were made by professionals without input from aides. We found four sites where parent aides were part of the decisions regarding classroom

instruction, in that they helped teachers determine long-range objectives and procedures (Johns County, Bonnet County, Roller, and Redlands). In addition, at two other sites aides helped with the planning of daily lessons (King Edward and Plains).

From the information in Table 7-4 it was evident that parent aides (1) had an active role in instruction, (2) had a minor role in decisions about instruction, and (3) frequently performed instructional support and non-instructional duties.

SUPPORT FOR PARAPROFESSIONALS

Two sorts of support were studied, programmatic (in terms of what the project provided to support parent aides) and personal (in terms of the attitudes and behavior of professional personnel). Our results appear in Table 7-5. The only secondary finding of interest was that at 11 of the 12 sites aides were given some form of training (the 12th site was Mountain View, where the one parent had been an aide for a number of years).

CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES

In the remainder of this section we provide information on the factors that contributed to our major findings regarding parents as paid paraprofessionals, and also on the outcomes of those activities.

PARENT AIDES WERE FOUND AT 75 PERCENT OF THE SITES

We identified parents serving as paid aides at 12 of the 16 sites in the Site Study. At the other four sites we found that either there were no aides in the Title I project, or else aides were required to be certificated persons. As such, then, there were 12 sites where parents had an opportunity to be hired as aides, and were so at each.

The findings regarding parent aides reported here are not completely consistent with what we obtained during the Federal Programs Survey, which was national in scope. Respondents to the FPS questionnaire indicated that 60 percent of the schools had Title I aides and that only 22 percent of the schools had parents serving as aides. This inconsistency is largely due to the difference used in the definition of "parent" during the two data collections. In the FPS we used parent to refer only to parents of students currently enrolled in the school being examined. The more liberal definition employed in the Site Study, which included parents of students enrolled in other schools in the district, or parents whose children had gone on to higher levels of education (called "former parents"), resulted in our discovering more parents filling aide positions.

The factors that accounted for parents serving as paid aides were somewhat complex. In general, school districts did not have policies that gave preference to parents for aide positions. Nonetheless, we found that more than half of the paid paraprofessionals were parents. This occurred, it appears, because of the practices districts followed in recruiting and selecting persons for paid aide positions. These practices tended to favor the employment of parents. The more important dimensions of these policies were that parents frequently were specifically recruited because they were known to school personnel through the parents' prior participation in project affairs (e.g., serving as volunteers or attending project functions). Once recruited, parents were selected because the principal of a school at which an opening occurred typically preferred employing someone with whom the principal was familiar--again, a practice that made parents more likely to be chosen than outsiders.

Thus, the critical factors involved with the employment of parents for aide positions were associated with the informal recruitment and selection processes. Each of these caused parents to have a high likelihood of obtaining such positions and, in fact, resulted in over half of the aide positions being filled by parents.

Perhaps the most striking illustration of this observation occurred at the Redlands District, where there were 23 Title I aides, all of whom were parents. This unanimity, in the face of a lack of district policy to give preference to parents, was the result of the application of an informal policy by principals at the two sample schools to recruit and hire parents for Title I aide positions.

PARENT AIDES WERE NOT CONSIDERED PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

With the exception of one district where parents were given priority for aide positions (Johns County), school district and Title I project personnel did not think of paid parent paraprofessionals as part of the parental involvement component of projects. Instead, aides (whether parents or not) were thought of exclusively as part of the instructional component of a project. Two facts relate to this finding. First, we found no distinction made between parents and non-parents regarding hiring and assignment of aides (with the exception of Johns County, as noted earlier). Second, we found that Parent Coordinators and School Advisory Councils were not active participants in the aide component.

The reasons there were parents in the majority of aide positions were outlined previously. Our observation that projects made no distinctions between parents and non-parents when implementing a paid aide aspect serves only to underscore the conclusion that parents served as aides more as an artifact than as a planned dimension of projects.

Had the use of parents as aides been treated as part of a project's parental involvement component, one would have expected to find Parent Coordinators and SACs being active in the recruitment, hiring, training, and monitoring of aides. Instead, our evidence was that Parent Coordinators sometimes alerted parents when openings occurred, but otherwise were not involved with aides. The training and monitoring of aides was invariably undertaken by professionals associated with instruction, including teachers and curriculum coordinators.

The reason parent aides were not considered a dimension of parental involvement most likely was that there were no mandates for parent aides in Title I legislation and regulations. Certainly comments from district and project personnel indicated that the lack of mandate was highly important. For most project personnel, parental involvement encompasses (a) the mandated aspects--advisory councils--and (b) those forms of parental participation that were traditional, particularly the support of a school through non-instructional volunteering and communications with parents.

Perhaps the most critical observation regarding parents as aides, with respect to district and project intentions to hire parents, emerged from an analysis of who actually were the persons serving as aides. Among the 58 percent of the aides we classified as parents, most were what we called "former parents" while others were parents of students not part of the Title I project, meaning that very few aides were parents of students currently participating in a project.

Our discovery that most parent aides were, in reality, former parents bears further discussion. A very typical pattern in Title I projects was the continuation of persons in aide positions for many years. In some districts the positions were treated as though they were tenured (and in some cases they actually were). This meant that a person who had been hired as an aide continued to fill that position until the person wished to leave it. Therefore, many persons who were, at some time in the past, parents of students in a Title I project and had been hired as aides continued in their positions far beyond the time that their children were in the project. Thus, while they at one time fit the narrowest definition of a parent in the study (they had a child who was in the project), they now fell into the category of former parent.

PARENT AIDES WERE AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE INSTRUCTIONAL PROCESS

Our analysis of the actual duties fulfilled by parent aides indicated that the most prevalent activities were directly associated with instruction. We found

aides most frequently reinforced concepts previously taught by a teacher, supervised students engaged with teaching machines, and made instructional materials. Further, in five of the 12 sites with aides we found that paraprofessionals were teaching new concepts, that is, were operating as co-teachers. While we found that invariably aides also had clerical duties, these were relatively minor in comparison with their instructional duties.

The findings outlined above are very similar to those obtained in the Federal Programs Survey. Respondents to FPS questionnaires reported that the most frequent activities in which aides engaged were the reviewing or reteaching of concepts (at 79 percent of the schools) and the provision of individual help to students with special needs (at 71 percent of the schools). These respondents also said that instructional support or non-instructional activities were the most frequent at but 31 percent of the schools.

The factors that led to parents being assigned instructional duties were somewhat obscure. The most commonly cited factors were that paraprofessionals lightened the teacher's load, and allowed students to receive more individual attention. However, it should be pointed out that these comments were directed toward aides in general and were not specific to parents. We did not find many teachers or principals who reported that parents had unique skills or characteristics that would cause these professionals to specifically hire parents for aide positions. (But in a later section describing the results of parent paraprofessionals we present evidence that parents involved as aides did have beneficial results for students.)

PARENT AIDES WERE NOT PART OF INSTRUCTIONAL DECISION MAKING

The data we obtained regarding parents and the instructional decision-making process showed that in four sites parents had a major role regarding classroom instruction, but in no case were they active in decisions concerning schoolwide or projectwide instruction. Thus, at one-third of the sites with aides, parents helped individual teachers make decisions about objectives, materials,

student grouping, etc., but no such decisions at the school or project level were made with parent participation; curricular committees determining these matters did not include parent aides.

Three attitudinal factors were most closely associated with the lack of parental participation in decision making. First, some parent aides said that they did not feel qualified to take part in these decisions. These parents reported that they did not feel they had the expertise to suggest what should be done in a project's instructional component. Second, some parent aides (particularly at rural locations) indicated that parental participation in instructional decision making was not needed; these parents felt that the project staff had developed a reasonable instructional program and since parents were satisfied they need not become involved. Third, at many sites administrators and teachers expressed the attitude that important decisions regarding curriculum and instruction should be reserved for professionals who had the requisite training to make them. Singly, and in combination, these different attitudes caused project designs to preclude the participation of parents in the making of instructional decisions.

OUTCOMES OF PARENTS AS AIDES

While studying the participation of parents as paid paraprofessionals we sought information on the outcomes of their activities. Two sorts were considered; outcomes for individuals and outcomes for institutions. We wanted to know whether parents serving as aides had any effect on the participating parents, the teachers with whom they worked, and the administrators under whom they worked. Further, we looked for the effects of parent aides on Title I projects and schools (such as on project design and implementation).

Personal Outcomes

Not surprisingly, the most frequently-cited personal outcomes were those for parents who served as paid paraprofessionals. Those parents reported that

they had achieved a better understanding of the Title I project and had come to feel more supportive of it. They also noted that they had developed better relations with their own children and had become more concerned with their children's education.

Only a few teachers and administrators described personal outcomes for themselves, as a result of interacting with parent aides. There were some indications of teachers and principals developing better rapport with parents after working with parent aides, but these reports were scattered.

Institutional Outcomes

Earlier we stated that parent aides did not have active roles in the making of decisions regarding instruction. This meant that parent aides were not involved with the design of the instructional component in a project and were not involved with ongoing decision making as the component was being implemented.

Undoubtedly the most striking outcome of an institutional nature was that students developed better attitudes toward their work when their parents were involved with the school's instructional program. We neither tested nor interviewed students, but parents and professionals we talked with frequently indicated that students were positively affected when their parents served as aides. This effect transcended the simple use of paraprofessionals, and was a unique finding regarding parent aides.

Finally, there were negative outcomes when parents served as aides. A few teachers indicated that they had to devote extra time to overseeing the work of parent aides, and some teachers noted that they were never certain parents were knowledgeable in the subject with which they were assisting the teacher. There were some administrators who stated that it took time, energy, and skill to create an effective parent aide program. Finally, some parents reported that teachers created an intimidating image, which left parents feeling

incapable of talking with teachers about curriculum and instruction, and caused problems with communication. (It should be pointed out that these negative outcomes were exceedingly rare and were reported by a minor proportion of the persons interviewed during the study.)

III. PARENTS AS INSTRUCTIONAL VOLUNTEERS

There were no ongoing Title I-related instructional volunteer programs at any of the 16 sites studied. A few sites seemed to have potential for developing programs, but it would be inappropriate to describe them because of their provisional nature. However, some statements can be made about the lack of Title I-sponsored instructional volunteer programs at the sites included in our sample group.

First, it should be noted that Title I regulations did not require local districts to implement a specific Title I instructional volunteer program, and in many districts it was reported that there were no funds for establishing such a program. Second, since many of the schools already had PTA or school or district volunteer programs in operation (not specific to Title I), they did not perceive a need to duplicate the effort by creating a Title I-sponsored instructional volunteer component. Rather, if volunteers were needed for a Title I project, administrators and staff could request assistance from parent volunteer programs already functioning at their schools. Finally, since most projects had paid classroom aides, many parents indicated that they were uninterested in volunteering for the same duties for which other parents were being paid.

IV. PARENTS AS HOME TUTORS

There are two ways in which parents can be involved as teachers of their own children at home. One way is through a formalized home tutoring program. At two sites we found systematic home tutoring programs, sponsored by and a central part of Title I projects. These are described below as case studies. The second way parents can help their own children is through informal assistance with children's classwork or homework assignments. We uncovered a number of instances where Title I projects provided training to parents in how to assist their children in this manner, and these are discussed briefly.

FORMAL HOME TUTORING

CASE STUDY 1: JOHNS COUNTY

This was a well-organized, commercial program paid for and implemented by the Title I project. Materials, in reading or mathematics, were sent to students' homes. Parents worked with their children 15 minutes a day, four days a week, then returned the materials for correcting. At the end of ten weeks, students were tested and could test out of the program when they have made a year's progress.

Principals selected students to participate in the program, and most Title I students were involved. Parent Coordinators were trained by the commercial organization and, in turn, trained parents. Parent Coordinators also monitored the program and assisted parents with any problems.

Both parents and school personnel were pleased with the home tutoring program, and reported that many students had made impressive academic gains from their participation. The most-frequently voiced problem was that Parent Coordinators were overloaded, working with many schools and many parents.

CASE STUDY 2: BONNET COUNTRY

At this site home tutoring was based on the use of a learning device developed by district personnel to help parents teach their children reading and mathematics. Parents were made aware of the teaching device during advisory council meetings, and thereafter were assisted in implementing it by Parent Coordinators.

Typically, the Parent Coordinator took a version of the device to the parent's home during a visitation, demonstrated its use, and assisted the parent in constructing the device. Teachers produced skill cards that students were to use in conjunction with the device.

At one of the sample schools about 75 percent of the Title I student's parents were using the device, while at the second school about 25 percent of the parents were. Because the home tutoring program was only one year old, there was no evidence of its success, although project personnel expressed considerable enthusiasm for it.

INFORMAL ASSISTANCE WITH SCHOOLWORK

We did not explore in detail project efforts at preparing parents to informally assist their children with schoolwork because these efforts were usually modest in scope, were held infrequently, and were not directly tied to students' classroom objectives. Nonetheless, we discovered enough examples to warrant a brief description here.

Project activities in this area concerned techniques that parents could employ to help their children succeed in mathematics and reading. The activities were generally designed and conducted by Title I teachers, in cooperation with Parent Coordinators. Several sites held workshops during which parents learned to make educational games that they could play with their children at home (referred to as "make-it, take-it" workshops). At six sites workshops

and discussion groups were held on topics related to parental assistance to their children; these sessions often were accompanied by reading lists and student worksheets. Among the topics treated in these workshops were "The Benefits of Reading," "Ways to Apply Reading and Math in the Home Environment," Summertime Activities," and "Study Techniques."

OUTCOMES OF HOME TUTORING

As was suggested in the two case studies of formal home tutoring programs, respondents associated with the two projects perceived these programs to have had positive impacts on student learning. We were frequently told about the number of students who had improved in academic skills as a result of their receiving formal tutorial assistance from their parents.

A second positive outcome of formal home tutoring and informal assistance with schoolwork was that proportionately these activities involved many parents. That is, among the range of parental involvement activities that went on at various sites, parents as home tutors involved more parents in an active, ongoing way than did any other activity.

V. CONCLUSIONS

In this section we look retrospectively at our findings regarding the educational function in project parental involvement components, and suggest actions that could be taken to increase the participation of parents in instructional activities. Our conclusions are predicated on two assumptions. The first is that federal and local policy makers want parents involved actively with the instructional process in Title I projects, and the second is that these policy makers see such involvement of parents as legitimate dimensions of a project's parental involvement component.

It was clear from the comments of numerous respondents, at almost every site, that the lack of specificity in Title I legislation and regulations for parents in an instructional role served to inhibit the implementation of activities related to such a role. Many district and project respondents indicated that they were quite concerned with meeting regulatory requirements, and the absence of requirements regarding the educational function in parental involvement caused them to give this function little attention.

We found that 11 of the 16 projects in the Site Study employed persons as Parent Coordinators. We also found that PCs had only a minor relationship to the educational function in that they were primarily involved by alerting parents of paid aide positions that were opening. Since we have seen the influential role played by PCs in the development and implementation of advisory councils, we believe that they could be equally instrumental in bringing about improvement in the educational function if they were given a more meaningful role. Thus, projects could include the educational function in the definition of tasks for Parent Coordinators. This would likely take on such forms as having PCs (and School Advisory Councils) formally involved with recruitment and hiring of aides, recruitment of instructional volunteers, recruitment of parents to tutor their children at home, the training of parents for instructional roles, and the monitoring of instructional programs that incorporate parents. (Of course, this implies that the educational

function becomes a recognized dimension of a project's parental involvement component, legitimating activities of Parent Coordinators and SACs in this area.)

One problem that emerged as we looked at parents in the instructional process was that many parents were reluctant to volunteer for classroom activities when they saw that other community members were being paid as aides for similar tasks. In effect, parents felt that they should not donate their time and energies when others were being paid. We believe that parent aides and parent volunteers can exist in the same location, and by their presence can enrich a project's instructional offerings. In order to bring this about and overcome the reluctance to volunteering noted above, projects might establish a career ladder in which parents first serve as instructional volunteers and thereafter are hired as aides.

We had the opportunity to examine two different approaches to home tutoring during the Site Study. One was based on a commercial program, the second on a locally-developed program. Each had its own virtues and drawbacks, but there was evidence that each was contributing to student achievement of cognitive objectives and was involving numerous parents. Our findings suggest that projects explore proven methods for carrying out home tutoring, i.e., either commercial programs that would be bought with Title I funds, or programs developed at other Title I sites that could be produced by a given project with its own Title I funds.

	COMPASS	JOHNS CO.	BONNET CO.	KING EDWARD	PLAINS	ROLLER	KINGSTOWN	REDLANDS	BRISBANE	MT. VIEW	SUMMER PLACE	MEADOWLANDS
HIRING POLIGY	No parent priority	Priority to parents	No parent priority	Encourage parents	No parent priority	No parent priority	No parent priority	No parent priority	No parent priority	No parent priority	No parent priority	No parent priority
NUMBER OF AIDES: PARENTS/TOTAL	3/21	9/13	9/10	3/9	7/11	4/6	5/7	23/23	2/2	1/1	1/4	3/11
RECRUITMENT STRATEGY	Personal contact Informal network	Media Personal contact Informal network	Notices to homes Posted notices Media Meeting announce-ments Personal contact Informal network	Posted notices Media Personal contact Informal network	Informal network	Informal network	Media	Notices to homes Personal contact	Media Personal contact Informal network	Informal network	Notices to homes Posted notices Media Informal network	Notices to homes Posted notices Meeting announcements Personal contact Informal network
HIRING INPUT	District	District Principal	District Principal	District Principal Teachers	District Principal	District Principal Teachers	District	Principal Teachers	District Principal	Principal Teachers	Principal Teachers	District Principal
FINAL HIRING AUTHORITY	District	District Principal	District Principal	District Principal Teachers	District Principal	District Principal Teachers	District	Principal	District	Principal	Principal	District
HIRING CRITERIA	Examination	HS education Be parent	HS education	HS education Principal recommen-dation	Prior volunteer	HS education	HS education	Live in area	None	None	Typing skill	HS education Examination

Table 7-1. Project Intentions/Parent Opportunities

	COMPASS	JOHNS CO.	BONNET CO.	KING EDWARD	PLAINS	ROLLER	KINGSTOWN	REDLANDS	BRISBANE	MT. VIEW	SUMMER PLACE	MEADOWLANDS
SEX: % FEMALE	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	80%	100%	100%	100%	100%
AGE: 20-30	0	5%	0		0	0	0		0	0		
31-40	100%	80%	100%	No data	100%	100%	100%	No data	100%	100%	No data	No data
41+	0	15%	0		0	0	0		0	0		
ETHNICITY	B: 100%	B: 67% H: 33%	B: 56% W: 44%	No data	B: 57% W: 43%	B: 100%	H: 100%	B: 10% H: 10% W: 80%	B: 50% W: 50%	W: 100%	W: 100%	No data
EDUCATION	HS: 100%	HS: 100%	HS: 100%	HS: 100%	HS: 67% HS+: 33%	HS: 100%	HS: 100%	HS: 100%	HS: 100%	HS: 100%	HS: 100%	HS: 100%

LEGEND:

ETHNICITY
B = Black
H = Hispanic
W = White

EDUCATION
HS = High School graduate
HS+ = Some college

Table 7-2. Characteristics of Paid Parent Aides

		COMPASS	JOHNS CO.	BONNET CO.	KING EDWARD	PLAINS	ROLLER	KINGSTOWN	REDLANDS	BRISBANE	MT. VIEW	SUMMER PLACE	MEADOWLANDS
YEARS IN OPERATION		13	8	14	11	12	12	14	15	14	15	14	No data
FUNDING SOURCES		Title I	Title I State/district	Title I State/district	Title I	Title I	Title I	Title I Other federal	Title I	Title I	Title I	Title I	Title I
CHANGES IN COMPONENT		None	Became after-school	Became pull-out	None	None	Aide handbook updated	Focus only on Ktg	Reduced funding	Reduced funding	Reduced funding	Typing Skill required	None
KEY PERSONNEL ROLE	PROJECT DIRECTOR	No data	Minimal contact	Minimal contact	Select	Minimal contact	Evaluate	Select Evaluate	No data	Select Evaluate	Select	None	Select Evaluate
	PRINCIPALS	Assign	Select Evaluate	Select Evaluate	Select Evaluate	Evaluate	Select Monitor Evaluate	Select Monitor Evaluate	Select Plan tasks Evaluate	Select Plan tasks Evaluate	Select	Select Evaluate	Select Plan tasks Monitor Evaluate
	TEACHERS	Monitor Train	Select	Plan tasks Monitor	Select Train Plan tasks Monitor	Plan tasks	Plan tasks Monitor Evaluate	Plan tasks	Select Plan tasks Monitor	Select Plan tasks	Select Monitor Evaluate	Select Train Plan tasks Evaluate	Select Train Plan tasks Monitor
	CURRICULUM SUPERVISORS	Evaluate	Monitor	Plan tasks	No data	Train Plan tasks Evaluate	Train	None	None	Evaluate	No data	No data	Select Train Evaluate
DISTINCTION MADE: TITLE I & NON-TITLE I, PARENTS & NON-PARENTS		None	Title I aides must be parents	Title I aides work only with math	None	None	None	Title I aides work only with Ktg	None	None	None	None	None
EVALUATION OF AIDES		Formal, by project, yearly Informal, by teacher, ongoing	Formal, by principal, yearly Informal, by teacher, ongoing	Formal, by principal, yearly Informal, by teacher, ongoing	Formal, by state, yearly Informal, by teacher, ongoing	Informal by project; principal, periodic	Formal, by principal and teacher, yearly Informal, by teacher, ongoing	Informal, by project; principal, ongoing	Formal, by principal; teacher, bi-annual	Formal, by state; principal, yearly	Formal, by teacher, yearly	Informal, principal; teacher, ongoing	Formal, by project; principal, yearly Informal, by teacher, ongoing

Ktg = Kindergarten

Table 7-3. Structure and Organization of Aide Component

	COMPASS	JOHNS CO.	BONNET CO.	KING EDWARD	PLAINS	ROLLER	KINGSTOWN	REDLANDS	BRISBANE	MT. VIEW	SUMMER PLACE	MEADOWLANDS
INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES	Reinforce skills Help with teaching machines	Teach concepts Reinforce skills Help with teaching machines Create materials	Teach concepts Reinforce skills Create materials Test pupils	Plan lessons Reinforce skills	Plan lessons Teach concepts Reinforce skills Create materials	Plan lessons Teach concepts Reinforce skills Create materials Test pupils	Reinforce skills Test pupils	Teach concepts Reinforce skills Create materials	Reinforce skills Help with teaching machines	Help with teaching machines	Test pupils	Reinforce skills
INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT ACTIVITIES	Maintain discipline	Maintain discipline Record pupil progress Help with clerical tasks	Maintain discipline Record pupil progress	Maintain discipline Record pupil progress Help with clerical tasks	Maintain discipline Record pupil progress Help with clerical tasks	Maintsin discipline Record pupil progress Help with clerical tasks	Maintain discipline Record pupil progress Help with clerical tasks	Maintain discipline Help with clerical tasks	Help with clerical tasks	Help with clerical tasks	Maintain discipline Help with clerical tasks	Maintain discipline Help with clerical tasks
NON-INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES	None	Supervise pupils outside classroom	Communicate with parents	Supervise pupils outside classroom Communicate with parents	None	Supervise pupils outside classroom Communicate with parents	Supervise pupils outside classroom Communicate with parents	Communicate with parents	No data	Supervise pupils outside classroom Communi-cate with parents	No data	Communicate with parents
PARTICIPATION IN INSTRUCTIONAL DECISION MAKING	None	Classroom level	Classroom level	None	None	Classroom level	None	Classroom level	None	None	None	None

Table 7-4. Functioning of Aide Component

	COMPASS	JOHNS CO.	BONNET CO.	KING EDWARD	PLAINS	ROLLER	KINGSTOWN	REDLANDS	BRISBANE	MT. VIEW	SUMMER PLACE	MEADOWLANDS
PRESERVICE TRAINING	None	Extensive, by project staff	Extensive, by project staff	Extensive, by project administration	No data	None	None	No data	Orientation, by outside organization	None	Orientation, by teachers	None
IN-SERVICE TRAINING	OJT, by teachers	On-going, by project staff	One week, by project staff	On-going, by project administration, teachers	On-going, by project consultants	On-going, by project consultants	On-going, by university	On-going, by project staff	None	None	None	On-going, by project staff, teachers

OJT = on the job

Table 7-5. Training of Aides

CHAPTER 8
OTHER FORMS OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

I. INTRODUCTION

Chapters 5, 6, and 7 of this report described the principal ways in which parents took part in Title I projects, as members of advisory councils and as participants in the instructional process. They do not, however, capture the full spectrum of parental involvement activities. In the first chapter we summarized the conceptual framework that guided the study, which contained five parental involvement functions. In this chapter we describe our findings concerning three other forms of parental involvement: parent education, school support, and community-school relations.

As we developed our conceptualization, we found quite early that the major parental involvement functions were those related to project governance and project instruction. However, we also recognized that there were additional

ways in which parents could participate in a Title I project, and we formulated three other categories for exploration during the Site Study. As this investigation progressed, it became evident that parental activities in these three categories were sparse, and we concluded that their treatment in this report should be within a single chapter.

As noted above, the three functions of concern here are parent education, school support, and community-school relations. The three functions were treated as follows. Parent education encompassed offerings in which Title I projects attempted to help parents with personal improvement (notably, with parenting skills). School support included various types of non-instructional volunteer activities by which projects utilized parent resources to enhance project activities other than classroom instruction. Community-school relations was composed of efforts on the parts of projects to communicate with parents and to develop positive relations between parents and project staff members.

PLAN FOR THE CHAPTER

We have organized this chapter in four sections. In the remainder of Section I we discuss the regulatory language regarding the three forms of parental involvement that are the subject of the chapter and then present our major findings concerning the three forms. Section II contains details on the three forms, in terms of what we found regarding project activities in each. In Section III we discuss our findings with a primary emphasis on identifying the causes and consequences of activities within the three forms of parental involvement. Finally, Section IV contains recommendations we make as a result of our study of parent education, school support, and community-school relations.

OTHER FORMS OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN TITLE I REGULATIONS

The regulations in effect for Title I, during the time of the Site Study, did not address activities related to parent education, school support, or

community-school relations. The regulations, then, neither required that projects include these functions in their parental involvement components, nor forbade them. The regulatory silence meant that each local project could decide for itself whether or not to incorporate any of these three forms of parental involvement in the project design.

SUMMARY OF MAJOR FINDINGS

The analysis we carried out of our data from the Site Study brought us to five major findings with respect to the parental involvement functions treated in the chapter. The major findings are summarized below, and are explored in more detail in subsequent portions of the chapter.

- Most of the 16 projects in the Site Study offered some form of parent education. By district and project definitions, parent education was complex, including many topics and occurring at several levels.

- School support activities, under the auspices of Title I, were found at only six sites and were not a a major activity at those sites.

- Virtually all projects engaged in community-school relations activities, primarily those aimed at communication and seldom those associated with interpersonal relations.

- There were wide variations in the levels of activities in all three forms of parental involvement.

- While it was possible to separate these three forms of parental involvement, as we did in our conceptualization and data collection, districts and projects tended to treat them comprehensively with interrelated activities.

II. PARENTS IN OTHER FORMS OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Table 8-1 contains information on parent education, school support, and community-school relations. We draw upon this information as we describe project activities in this section.

PARENT EDUCATION FUNCTION

In designing this portion of the Site Study data collection, we defined parent education as efforts on the part of Title I projects to help parents make personal improvements. By that we meant educational offerings to improve parents' ability to cope with the problems presented by daily living, especially in caring for their children, We were particularly alert for parent education addressing parenting skills, consumerism, nutrition, and mastering English. While our definition of parent education was somewhat circumscribed, we found that districts and projects maintained a more expanded view, as is evident below.

At ten of the 16 projects studied, respondents reported that they provided some form of parent education. These project respondents identified two purposes for parent education. The primary purpose was to provide parents with the information they needed to participate more fully in the education of their children. ("Parents as Partners in Education" was a theme at several sites.) These offerings included instruction in parenting skills, workshops and classes in assisting students with classwork, and workshops on general aspects of the Title I project. In addition to the above subject areas, District Advisory Council members at one site conducted field trips for all parents to community facilities as part of a community awareness drive, and at another site the Title I project offered classes in sewing and home repairs for parents.

The secondary purpose of education offerings was outreach. It was used as a strategy for attracting parents to the schools and to activities undertaken in the name of Title I (e.g., School Advisory Council meetings, open houses, and

conferences). Respondents at four sites stated that parents would come to school to hear speakers or to discuss subjects of interest to them.

In addition to viewing parent education as a comprehensive effort to reach parents and involve them in their children's education, districts and schools sometimes combined their resources with those of Title I to create learning opportunities for all parents. At two sites, district compensatory education offices staged conferences open to parents of children served by all categorical funds. At two other sites, schools held workshops open to all parents regardless of whether their children were served by any program. Title I personnel helped to organize and present these offerings and Title I parents attended them (although exact data on the number of Title I attendees were not available).

Some School Advisory Councils also opened their meetings to all served parents and included activities they considered parent education (e.g., lectures on parenting skills or helping children with schoolwork) along with Title I business proceedings. Five sites held such multi-purpose meetings at least once during the school year. In these five districts, School Advisory Council membership was open and fluid; parent education workshops were offered as enticements for parents to attend meetings.

The most notable example of a district's combining its resources to present a comprehensive set of learning opportunities for all parents was the King Edward District. The district held a two-day conference to disseminate information on compensatory education to all parents (there were 900 attendees, 300 of whom were parents). The conference covered such subjects as reading activities for young children; explanations of the Title I, Title VII Bilingual, and state compensatory programs; discussion of ethics and values in modern society with related parenting advice; and explanations of ways for parents to involve themselves in the schools. The same subject areas were offered to parents by the project-level Parent Coordinator in several lecture/discussion sessions throughout the year. At School Advisory Council meetings these

subjects were again covered with emphasis on the implementation of ideas presented in the larger groups.

Although districts and projects made no clear delineation among the various subject areas presented and frequently covered several subjects during one event, in this report we discuss the many aspects of parent education in separate sections. Efforts to help parents understand the learning process and to assist children with schoolwork at home have been described in Chapter 7 under Parents as Tutors of Their Own Children. Project activities to inform parents about the project itself are treated later in this chapter under Community-School Relations. Below is a description of parenting skills instruction found at six sites.

In the parent effectiveness area, the primary effort was directed toward helping parents develop positive parent-child relationships. Although organized by projects or districts, these sessions were conducted by specialists in the social sciences (e.g., psychologists, educators) or personnel from social service agencies (e.g., nurses, social workers). Films and lectures, followed by group discussion, were presented on such topics as good nutrition, aspects of children's physical and emotional development, discipline techniques (such as how to deal with unacceptable behavior and alienation), character building (how to instill a sense of values and ethics), and methods of communication between parent and child. At the six sites where we found parenting skills covered, some combination of the above topics was included in presentations to parents. As described above, these presentations took place at gatherings sponsored at many levels: the school, advisory council meetings, the project and the district.

SCHOOL SUPPORT FUNCTION

In Chapter 7 we discussed the various ways that parents participated in Title I instructional programs. This section explores the non-instructional support services parents might offer. We were interested in those activities or services that were provided in a systematic way or on a regular basis as

part of the Title I project. For example, parents might act as speakers, improve buildings and grounds, or raise funds for various school or extra-curricular activities.

Our major finding in this area was that at very few sites (four out of 16) did parents offer their time and services under the auspices of Title I, and at two other sites the Title I project was combined with school programs for school support activities. At those six sites parents did not render services in a systematic or organized fashion, but rather on an as-needed basis. Typically, Parent Coordinators or other project personnel requested assistance with these activities, and parents volunteered to help implement them as the need arose.

Of the ten sites with no Title I-related support program, eight had active support programs that were independent of Title I. Principals, teachers, PTAs and other parent organizations maintained cadres of volunteers whose activities ranged from cafeteria helpers to managers of major fund-raising drives. In these districts, little distinction was made between Title I parents and other parents.

COMMUNITY-SCHOOL RELATIONS FUNCTION

This function encompassed two interrelated aspects of the articulation between a school/project and its community: communication and interpersonal relations. This section, then, deals with the efforts of districts, projects, and schools to effect the exchange of information and the development of personal ties between parents and project staff. We found that these efforts occurred principally in two ways: during personal interactions between parents and staff and as one-way communication from staff to parents.

Interpersonal Information Exchange

Projects created various opportunities for parents and staff to get acquainted with each other on a one-to-one basis. The most common event held for this

purpose was a one-time orientation to Title I. Projects at nine of the 16 sites held open houses, usually at the beginning of the school year, to allow parents to meet Title I teachers, Parent Coordinators and their school and project staff members. These events generally included information on the nature and design of the Title I project as it related to parents and students, a discussion of coming events in which parents might participate, and requests that parents volunteer for the School Advisory Council.

Other activities designed to enhance personal interaction included parent-teacher conferences during which Title I teachers, parents, and occasionally principals could discuss the students' progress, academic needs, and ways parents might assist with schoolwork. Eight sites reported holding such conferences on a systematic basis. At three sites, parents visited Title I classrooms for some part of a day to observe the interaction of students and teachers and then talked with teachers. Four sites held periodic social events such as parent-teacher banquets, teas and luncheons, award ceremonies to recognize parents' efforts to help their children, and student performances, to which parents and staff members were invited.

The two-way communications described above took place when parents came to the school to interact with staff. Since many parents rarely came to school for any purpose, yet wished to voice their concerns about the project, Parent Coordinators frequently resolved this problem by serving as intermediaries among parents, the school, the project, and the district. Nine of the 16 projects had Parent Coordinators (and one project had a Social Worker functioning in a similar capacity) whose jobs included acting as liaison between the school and the community. They made house calls and phone calls, wrote and answered letters and notes, and in general gave parents the opportunity to communicate with a project person who could relay their messages to other staff members.

One-Way Communication

This form of communication involved efforts on the part of districts, projects, or schools to keep parents informed of project purposes, activities, and events.

The most common method of informing parents was through a newsletter published periodically and available to all parents. Ten sites produced newsletters. In five cases the newsletter was originated by the Title I project and contained information about general school/district activities. In four cases the newsletter was a cooperative effort by school, district, and Title I personnel and contained information pertinent to all parents, including Title I parents. In one case the newsletter emanated from the state Office of Compensatory Education and concerned all aspects of education.

Title I and other school activities were also announced in the more simple fashion of calendars, bulletins, notes, and flyers sent home with students. Eleven projects reported using these methods to alert parents to upcoming meetings and events. At four sites, media announcements were used; projects and districts periodically submitted notices for publication in newspapers and arranged for the announcement of special activities on radio and television.

In addition to the above, two projects maintained parent libraries and one a media center that contained information about Title I, project documents, and books on parenting skills. One project produced and distributed a handbook describing the project, avenues of involvement, and a directory of local service agencies.

Five projects presented a comprehensive view of the Title I project and its implications for parental involvement at orientation workshops. Their primary purpose was to impart information, and little interaction took place. Projects offered half-day to two-day workshops and seminars open to all served parents, as opposed to those offered exclusively to the members of District

and School Advisory Councils. (The latter was directed toward preparing council members to function effectively in their organizations, and they are described in Chapters 5 and 6.) Parents were introduced to the various ways they might be involved in the project, and a few sites offered information geared toward effective participation in an advisory council, such as parliamentary procedures, minute taking, and election procedures.

III. DISCUSSION: CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES

Section I of this chapter included statements of the major findings regarding parent education, school support, and community-school relations. In this section we examine each finding and attempt to explain why it occurred, by looking at the factors that contributed to each finding. Then we describe the outcomes of the three parental involvement functions addressed in the chapter.

To recapitulate, our major findings were as follows:

- Most Title I projects offered some form of parent education.
- School support activities, under Title I, were infrequently found.
- Virtually all projects engaged in community-school relations activities.
- There was considerable variability in the level of activities in all three functional areas.
- Districts and projects tended to treat these three forms of parental involvement in a comprehensive, interactive fashion.

MOST PROJECTS OFFERED SOME FORM OF PARENT EDUCATION

We first considered the factors contributing to the existence or absence of a parent education component at the sampled sites. The provision of parent education seemed to result, primarily, from attitudes on the part of project personnel that Title I parents had special needs and that it was the project's responsibility to respond to these needs. Title I parents, respondents felt, often were poorly educated, had not mastered sufficient basic skills to effectively assist their children with school assignments, and did not automatically understand the purposes and objectives of the Title I project, especially as they related to participation in project governance. Project

personnel, at sites where the highest level of parent education occurred, stated that parents functioned more effectively as project participants if they were helped to acquire some of the information and skills that they lacked. Thus, instruction in parenting, assisting children with schoolwork, community awareness, and Title I awareness was provided.

At some sites, participation in the project was interpreted as helping students succeed in school as opposed to being involved in meaningful project governance. At other sites, project personnel (especially Parent Coordinators) used instruction in areas of interest to parents as an enticement to attend meetings or to visit the school. At sites where School Advisory Council membership was open to any served parent, coordinators appeared to turn to parent education as a way to cope with the constant influx of new members who were not familiar with the project and its proceedings. That is, parent education was frequently offered to acquaint new members with the project. The argument was that parent education offerings give substance to council meetings that were attended by parents with such great variations in their level of awareness that issues concerning the project could not be meaningfully discussed.

The more seriously committed a project was to providing parent education, the more complex this area became. As is discussed later, high activity projects tended to view parental involvement as a comprehensive, interrelated set of activities. The primary contributing factor to the provision of instruction in parenting skills, as we defined it, was essentially this comprehensive approach. This type of instruction did not exist in isolation, but was combined with information about the project and/or assistance with children's schoolwork. Parenting skills was seen as another aspect of the effort to increase parents' ability to relate more effectively to their children. It was felt by staff and parents alike that positive parent-child relationships contributed to better student performance and to more positive student attitudes toward school.

There were no specific data on reasons for not offering parenting instruction. However, sites that did not provide it were consistent with the pattern applicable to all other forms of parental involvement: they did not have Parent Coordinators to organize such sessions; staff attitudes were less positive; funding levels were lower; and parents were not considered as important to the project as they were at high-activity sites. In addition, parenting instruction at several sites was available at other nearby agencies (e.g., a local college). Project staff did not feel the need to compete with these other offerings.

SCHOOL SUPPORT ACTIVITIES, UNDER TITLE I, WERE INFREQUENTLY FOUND

In examining the factors that contributed to the presence of a Title I support program, the attitude of the Parent Coordinator appeared to be most important. Parent Coordinators were responsible for communicating the needs of the project to parents. If they believed that parents could make valuable contributions to the project in terms of offering time, goods, and services, they made efforts to determine what parent resources were available and used them. Parents stated that they would be willing to assist with project activities if they were aware that their services were needed. The four sites with Title I-sponsored school support activities, and the two sites with integrated Title I and school activities, all had Parent Coordinators.

At Bonnet County and Plains, non-Title I support groups existed at the schools (e.g., PTAs, mother helpers, etc.), and Parent Coordinators found that Title I parents were active in these groups. Sites that had no Parent Coordinators (except for Stadium where the coordinator was negative toward parental involvement outside of governance) generally had active non-Title I support programs.

It may be that already active support programs eliminated the need for, or even deterred, similar Title I-sponsored activities. It appeared that the most organized and active non-Title I support programs occurred in schools that served middle-income neighborhoods, had few Title I parents, and did not

provide Parent Coordinators. An example of this situation was presented by Maple District, which was a geographically large but numerically small rural district serving primarily moderate-income farmers and upper-middle-income professionals. Title I students comprised less than 20 percent of the district student body, and the Title I grant was small and did not include a Parent Coordinator. One school had an extremely active volunteer component organized and maintained by PTA members who were professionals, had much free time to expend, and had many resources to offer toward helping raise funds for the school. Title I parents were not involved, although the funds benefited the entire school, including Title I students.

VIRTUALLY ALL PROJECTS ENGAGED IN COMMUNITY-SCHOOL RELATIONS ACTIVITIES

Table 8-1 indicates that, at every site but one, some opportunity was provided for Title I parents and staff to become acquainted and to communicate with each other. However, the number of these opportunities decreased fairly consistently from many at Johns County to none at Brisbane. This pattern may be attributable to a number of factors.

The first factor may best be described as the attitudes and resultant behavior of key school personnel and parents. At one extreme, exemplified by Johns County and King Edward, principals and teachers had positive feelings toward school-community relations. Principals officially welcomed parents to the school, made staff available to organize and publicize events, made facilities available at hours when parents were free, and encouraged teachers to help plan and participate in activities. Teachers contacted parents, conducted parent-teacher conferences in a manner that was respectful of parents, and, most importantly, attended events that were scheduled. Parent attitudes were also positive. They valued their role as facilitators of their children's education and felt that their contributions to the school were valued. As a result, many found time to participate in the activities that were offered.

At the opposite extreme were sites at which principals and teachers had more negative attitudes toward school-community relations. Principals discouraged participation and communication. Teachers felt threatened by or superior to parents and communicated with them ineffectually or very rarely. Parents mistrusted the school and placed low value on its endeavors. Tending toward this category were Compass, Cleteville, Mountain View, Stadium, and Brisbane.

Neither extreme condition existed at any one site. Our descriptions of the extremes were composites of the exemplifying sites. However, the closer a school environment was to either extreme, the greater was the influence on parent-school relations.

In addition to such attitudes and behavior, the patterns of social interaction in the community at large helped to define the parent-school relationship. Schools do not exist in a vacuum, but reflect the social practices of the citizens in the surrounding community. Although not presented in tabular form, our data provided some indication of the social atmosphere at each site. In some areas of the country (and in some cultural and ethnic groups), people had traditionally engaged in high levels of social interaction. They freely shared their ideas and resources and frequently interacted with each other on an informal basis. Casual relationships developed easily and were characterized by an atmosphere of openness, comraderie, and acceptance. Social, church, community, and school functions were utilized as opportunities for interaction. By contrast, in other areas of the country, social interaction was a much more reserved and formalized process. People tended to interact in carefully defined circles of family and close friends. Privacy was valued more than open communication and an attitude of "minding one's own business" prevailed. Newcomers and outsiders were accepted slowly, if ever, into the community. Social and community events occurred rarely, and schools were not viewed as appropriate places to socialize. The willingness of school staff to organize and of parents to participate in community-relations activities, especially those involving face-to-face communication, were affected by the greater pattern of social interaction in the community.

The two contributing factors described above (school staff/parent attitudes and pattern of social interaction) often interacted with each other to influence the level of school-community relations activities that occurred at a site.

One other factor seemed to contribute to both the existence of and success of community-school relations activities: the role of the Parent Coordinator. As discussed earlier in this report, the Parent Coordinator's role was frequently that of a liaison [illegible] the project, the school, and parents. As the primary initiator, planner, and implementer of activities designed to effect both the interpersonal and one-way exchange of information between the project and parents, the Parent Coordinator was extremely important. A dedicated Parent Coordinator often could overcome obstacles to communication. An example of this phenomenon occurred at Bonnet County where one principal in the sample neither welcomed parents nor made the school available for after-school events. The Parent Coordinator disseminated information during house calls, held meetings with parents in community centers, and encouraged parents to visit Title I classrooms. This helped overcome the reluctance shown by the principal. By contrast, the Parent Coordinator at Stadium did not reach out to parents in any way except in the governance area, and school-community relations essentially did not exist. This Parent Coordinator was concerned solely with advisory councils and did not expend any time or resources on community-school relations activities.

THERE WAS CONSIDERABLE VARIABILITY IN THE LEVEL OF ACTIVITIES

In Table 8-1, the 16 sites have been arranged according to the number of parent education, school support, and community-school relations activities organized for parents, with the most active site to the left and the least active site to the right. Activities tend to decrease from left to right consistently across the three functions.

Having identified this pattern we examined the factors that might contribute to its creation. The variables that bore a relationship to the level of activity were the existence of a Parent Coordinator, the amount of the Title I grant, state and local support for parental involvement, and staff attitudes. When state and district practices supported parental involvement, project and district staff were positive toward both involvement and communication, Parent Coordinators were provided, and the Title I grant was reasonably large, higher levels of activity existed.

We have already indicated the importance of Parent Coordinators in the implementation of each of the three forms of parental involvement discussed in this chapter. Table 8-2 verifies this; with the exception of Stadium, the districts with the highest levels of the three forms are also the districts with Parent Coordinators.

One might assume that a large grant would allow much activity to occur while a small grant would inhibit the development of workshops, parent education sessions, communications and the like. To a degree this was true: the level of activity tended to decrease with the level of funding. However, there were several exceptions to this pattern that seemed to relate to the attitudes of key district and project personnel toward parental involvement. Compass had the largest Title I grant, but had neither the benefit of positive state and district policy nor district and project staff disposed toward communication and involvement. Stadium had a large grant, but key personnel were neutral toward parent involvement, and the Parent Coordinator was negative towards parents involving themselves in anything but project governance. Summer Place had the smallest grant; and, even though state policy and staff attitudes generally were positive, there were not sufficient funds to hire Parent Coordinators. It can be concluded that projects needed enough money to cover the expenses of other activities (e.g., printing, speakers, information materials) and to hire Parent Coordinators who could assume the tasks.

The highest level of activity occurred at sites that were located in states that took positive actions toward parental involvement. In those states, Title I officials offered much technical assistance in the form of information pamphlets, state-level workshops and conferences, and on-site meetings with project personnel. Several of those states had produced and distributed Title I guidelines that established standards for parental involvement as well as other components of the Title I program. Some states with support for parental involvement monitored and evaluated Title I activities, including parental involvement. The districts located in those states had adopted a strong positive policy toward parental involvement which district personnel attempted to implement. It was logical to conclude that project staff attitudes toward parental involvement would be similarly affected.

We assessed the attitudes of district and project personnel toward having parents involved in school activities other than governance. While the attitudes of district personnel (superintendents and directors of compensatory education), Project Directors, principals, and Title I teachers generally followed the pattern of positive to mixed/neutral to negative, the attitudes of Parent Coordinators bore a direct relationship to the level of parental involvement activity. As described in Chapter 4 of this report, it was the job of Parent Coordinators to implement the parent involvement component of a project. They were reponsible for, or involved in, the conception and organization of parent education and training sessions, open houses, social events, home tutoring, and volunteer efforts. It seemed significant that the attitudes of Parent Coordinators towards these activities ranged from positive, through neutral, to negative, with the low-activity sites having no Parent Coordinators to undertake this kind of responsibility.

In order for activities to succeed, parents must know about them. We determined the attitudes of key staff toward communicating information about the project and its activities to parents. Our data made it clear that some districts and projects were more willing to meet parents, keep them informed, and listen to their concerns than were others. Sites at which personnel favored

much communication had high levels of activity and sites at which communication was discouraged were low-activity sites. Parent Coordinators were particularly important in this area as they were given the responsibility for initiating, coordinating and implementing communication efforts. Parent Coordinator attitudes were consistent with both the general level of activity at each site and the amount of communication that occurred.

We also focused on the attitudes of served parents toward the project. Their attitudes tended not to follow the pattern of activity levels, but were related to other factors. Parents generally felt that education was "a good thing" and necessary to their children's success in life. They were more skeptical, however, about the project. Some parents felt that participation in Title I carried the stigma of poverty and dumbness and did not wish to be associated with it. Others felt the project was accomplishing its objectives successfully and saw no need to participate in it. Feelings about the schools were mixed and seemed to relate to the kinds of experiences parents had with school staff and with the nature of their children's relationship to the schools. At every site, some parents were eager to be involved in school and Title I affairs and requested more of them; others were neutral, and others were not interested or negatively disposed toward school participation. Given this situation, we concluded that the level of activity was considerably less dependent on parent attitudes than it was on staff attitudes, especially those of Parent Coordinators.

DISTRICTS AND PROJECTS TREATED THE FUNCTIONS COMPREHENSIVELY

Our final finding in this area was not readily discernible from the data tables, but was more the result of statements made by district and project respondents combined with some degree of speculation. The three highest activity sites (Johns County, King Edward, and Bonnet County) had a number of characteristics in common, discussed below.

The primary characteristic was their comprehensive approach to other forms of parental involvement. District and project personnel tended to view involvement in the Title I program not as a set of isolated events, but as a series of interrelated activities that were designed to gain the maximum participation of parents in the education of their children and to utilize to the fullest extent all the resources available to the project. Although Title I legislation did not stipulate parental involvement beyond that of participation in the governance of the project, these districts had interpreted it to mean all activities that allow parents to understand, assist, and benefit from the project. Thus, School Advisory Council meetings (open to all served parents) became vehicles for parent education, school-community relations events, and opportunities to volunteer goods and services. Workshops and training sessions included volunteer efforts (e.g., refreshments), helped acquaint parents and staff, and generally served to communicate project objectives to parents. Resource Teachers, Parent Coordinators, Project Directors, directors of compensatory education, and principals combined their efforts in a cooperative movement toward greater participation. This movement was characterized by a fair amount of planning, organization, and dedication.

However, perhaps it is the nature of Title I itself that fostered the expansion of traditional parental involvement to a grander scale. It was a specialized program that not only mandated parental involvement in the form of governance, but also required more understanding, outreach, and communication than did the regular school program for its successful functioning. Because of eligibility requirements, the parents of Title I students were likely to be less affluent, less well educated, and less comfortable with the school environment than non-Title I parents. Such parents, it was felt by project personnel, needed special encouragement and incentive to participate in their children's education. The grant provided funds for extra staff and outreach activities that other districts could not afford. Districts that chose to take advantage of this opportunity could effect a greater degree of parental participation than those that did not.

The Johns County School District, our highest activity site, represented the comprehensive approach. Several types of Parent Coordinators were provided and were trained in their respective duties. Parent Coordinators attended planning meetings and kept records of participating and non-participating parents. Title I parents were purposefully recruited as both coordinators and classroom aides. The project maintained a print shop that, while offering students instruction in printing, produced copious amounts of printed communication (announcements, handbooks, newletters, programs--many with photographs of parents and students). Parent education was viewed as any effort to help parents become knowledgeable about the project, their children's educational needs and progress, and about themselves as major influences in their children's lives. The project sponsored many Title I activities, and the following example seemed to reflect project attitudes. A "parent appreciation" awards ceremony was held during which parents participating in the home tutoring program were recognized for their efforts to help their children master basic skills. The Parent Coordinators, in conjunction with parents, planned and executed the ceremony. Children performed and the county mayor and school superintendent offered congratulations to the group; 300 parents, children, and staff members attended the ceremony. At the end of the event, flyers announcing the next advisory council meeting were distributed.

OUTCOMES

In examining the personal/individual and educational/institutional outcomes of the three other forms of parental involvement, it became clear that, though we separated the discussion of the functions for purposes of collecting data, the outcomes to various participants and to the project, schools and students were as interrelated as the three functions themselves. Therefore, for purposes of this discussion, we consider outcomes in all three functions combined, except in those cases where outcomes were directly related to a specific function. Those cases will be mentioned separately.

Personal/Individual

Outcomes for individuals can be described in terms of changes in attitudes, both positive and negative. The major outcome to parents of participation in community-school relations, school support, and parent education activities was a change in attitudes toward the school in general and toward the project in particular. At ten sites it was stated that parents became more trusting of the project and were more willing to support it with both services and attendance at events. They began to consider the school less a forbidding place and more as an arena for communication and a source of knowledge about their children's progress. While they acquired new skills during parenting and home tutoring classes, they became aware that both the school and the project not only valued their children's success but made efforts to augment parents' abilities to contribute to it. Respondents at several sites reported that parents' heightened level of awareness of and increased positive feelings toward the project resulted in their making demands for more information and attention from project staff. Our data suggest that, in a few cases, school and project staff have responded by providing even more opportunities for interaction and communication.

A parallel change in attitudes toward parents was experienced by principals and project teachers. Principals reported feeling a greater sense of rapport with parents who frequented the schools and less fear of not being able to communicate effectively with them. Teachers were reported to be more aware of and respectful of parent concerns as a result of interpersonal exchanges with parents at open houses and conferences. Both principals and teachers stated that they developed more positive relationships with the children of parents with whom they communicated often.

Other outcomes, however, were not so positive. At one site, principals felt that the increased paperwork and organizational time required to implement parent education and community-school relations activities were not worth the results. Teachers at several sites reported that parents observing in the classroom interferred with their management of the class. (Other respondents

at these same sites suggested that teachers were threatened by having parents in the classroom.) Parents at a few sites reported forming negative opinions of the project based on unsatisfactory interchanges with principals and teachers. At one site, parents expressed concern that parent education activities during advisory council meetings were not only irrelevant to their needs, but superseded any meaningful involvement in project governance. These parents avoided advisory council meetings. Parents at several sites were displeased with the nature of information imparted at parent education workshops and, as a result, ceased to attend them. Other parents complained that efforts on the part of project staff to communicate with them about project activities were not successful. Parents at several sites were unaware of planned events, unaware that their services were needed or desired, and, in one case, unaware even that their children were being served by the project. One can conclude that the conduct of activities in the three funtions sometimes failed to bring about the desired outcome.

Educational/Institutional

Very few outcomes in this area were evident. The most notable outcomes mentioned by respondents related to student performance. At seven sites, project staff stated that students whose parents frequently participated in activities sponsored by the project exhibited more positive attitudes toward school, performed better in basic skills, and created fewer discipline problems than students whose parents were not participants. Respondents speculated that these students felt their parents were concerned about their progress and behavior and were sufficiently acquainted with principals and teachers to voice their concerns directly.

Certain projects realized several outcomes as a result of parental participation in support and communications activities. Project resources were augmented by the time, money, services, and skills that parents provided. Volunteers raised funds to help buy needed equipment. Events were made more pleasant by the parents' provision of refreshments, decorations, and other

amenities. At several sites, parents enhanced the curriculum by offering their skills in cultural and special subject areas. At four sites, respondents felt that project activities in general were more successful and commanded greater attendance because lines of communication between staff and parents were established and maintained. Project staff reported that informed parents made fewer complaints about project operations than did the uninformed. Finally, parent demands for more opportunities for participation resulted in the creation of the Parent Coordinator's position at several sites.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

At the beginning of this chapter we noted that the legislation and the regulations for Title I did not include provisions for parental involvement in terms of parent education, school support, or community-school relations. At the time of our study (and to date), the sole requirement for parental involvement in Title I projects was limited to the governance function, specifically to parents as members of advisory councils. Nonetheless, we did find examples of projects in which these three forms of parental involvement were operating.

If Federal and local decision makers affiliated with the Title I program wish to have high levels of parental involvement in the three forms studied in this chapter--parent education, school support, and community-school relations--they can pursue several avenues to accomplish this goal. We have identified some of these avenues, and present them here.

Undoubtedly the most important step that can be taken is to provide a Parent Coordinator as part of a Title I project. Our evidence was conclusive that someone playing the role of parent liaison and assuming responsibility for recruitment, organization, and coordination of parent activities was critical. We saw that these activities did not occur spontaneously, but had to be conceived, planned, and executed by someone. Many administrators cited parent apathy as the primary cause for low levels of involvement in the three forms discussed here, but apathy at times was overcome by an understanding, enthusiastic, and aggressive Parent Coordinator.

Respondents at several sites offered low levels of funding as the reason for little activity, and for the lack of a Parent Coordinator. While the amount of a Title I grant is not completely under the control of a project, it would be possible for project staff members to include parent coordination as a line item in their budget. Our conclusion, then, is that Grant Applications should include parent coordination in the budget. Recognizing that this may not be sufficient to accomplish many activities in the areas of parent education,

school support, and community-school relations, we also suggest that projects look for creative ways to augment Title I funds by requesting specific financial assistance from local and state agencies.

Our highest activity level sites were located in states where parental involvement was not only viewed with favor, but also was supported by provisions of technical assistance to local projects. Respondents at other sites noted that state Title I officials offered little if any assistance to their projects. It was our impression that states were unaware of local project needs, while projects waited passively for state support. This situation could be resolved. Our conclusion is that project personnel should more actively seek out the assistance of state Title I personnel, and that state officials should provide information to projects on the availability of state assistance.

Our final conclusion is that projects should adopt a comprehensive approach to the three forms of parental involvement addressed in this chapter. We saw that such an approach paid dividends, in those few locations were it was being followed. Title I projects generally have many opportunities to utilize non-instructional volunteers, to educate parents, and for parents and project personnel to interact. However, these opportunities can generate hit-and-miss activities at the whim of an influential person, or activities can be the result of a cooperative, comprehensive plan on the part of district, project, and school staffs. Such a plan would incorporate the following features: (a) assessment of parents' interests and concerns vis-a-vis the project; (b) provision of project activities to deal with these interests and concerns; (c) creating continuity by maintaining lists of parents and their involvement history; (d) following up with parents, both personally and in written form, to expand their knowledge of and participation in the projects; and (e) inclusion of provisions for the recognition of parent endeavors.

	JOHNS CO.	KING EDWARD	BONNET CO.	PLAINS	REDLANDS	MEADOW LANDS	KINGSTOWN	COMPASS	SUMMER PLACE	CLETEVILLE	MAPLE	MOUNTAIN VIEW	BENJAMIN CO.	ROLLER	STADIUM	BRISBANE
PARENT EDUCATION: TOPICS AND SPONSORS	Parenting (proj., SAC) School-work (proj., SAC) Title I (proj., DAC, SAC)	Parenting (dist., proj., SAC) Title I (dist., proj., SAC) Community awareness (DAC)	Parenting (proj., SAC) School-work (proj., SAC) Title I (proj.)	Title I (proj.)	Parenting (dist.) Title I (dist.)	Parenting (schl.) School-work (schl.)	Parenting (proj.) School-work (proj.)	Home Skills (schl.)	None	None	School-work (proj.)	None	None	School-work (SAC)	None	None
SCHOOL SUPPORT-TYPE UNDER TITLE I	Decorations Costumes Refreshments	Refreshments Chaperoning Donations					Fund-raising Refreshments Chaperoning Demonstrations Donations	Fund-raising Letter writing								
COMBINED TITLE I AND SCHOOL					✓	✓										
NON-TITLE I ACTIVITIES		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
COMMUNITY-SCHOOL RELATIONS: INTERPERSONAL EXCHANGES	Open House Conferences Parent visitation Social events PC as liaison	Open House Conferences Social events PC as liaison	Open House Conferences Parent visitation PC as liaison	Open House PC as liaison	Open House PC as liaison	Open House PC as liaison	Social events PC as liaison	Conferences Social events PC as liaison	Open House Conferences Parent visitation	Open House	Conferences	Conferences	Conferences	Open House	PC as liaison	None
ONE-WAY COMMUNICATIONS	Newsletter Notes Media Handbook Media center Workshops	Newsletter Notes Media Info. workshops	Newsletter Notes Media Info. workshops	Newsletter Notes Media center Info. workshops	Notes Info. workshops	Newsletter Notes	None	Newsletter	Notes	Newsletter Notes Media	Newsletter Notes Media	Newsletter Notes	Newsletter Notes	None	Notes	None

PC = Parent Coordinator
✓ = Non-instructional support activities not sponsored by Title I exist at this site

LEGEND: SPONSORS
Proj = Project
DAC = District Advisory Committee
SAC = School Advisory Committee
Dist = District
Schl = School

Table 8-1. Functioning of Other Forms of Parental Involvement

	JOHNS CO.	KING EDWARD	BONNET CO	PLAINS	REDLANDS	MEADOW LANDS	KINGS TOWN	COMPASS	SUMMER PLACE	CLETE VILLE	MAPLE	MOUNTAIN VIEW	BENJAMIN CO.	ROLLER	STADIUM	BRISBANE
PRESENCE OF PARENT COORDINATOR	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓						✓		
SIZE OF TITLE I GRANT	13.8M	2.9M	4M	2.9M	440K	1.2M	650K	67M	50K	155K	65K	80K	170K	1M	4.4M	320K
STATE SUPPORT FOR PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓				✓			
DISTRICT PROVISIONS FOR PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓										
ATTITUDES OF PROFESSIONALS RE. OTHER FORMS OF PI	●	●	●	●	●	◒	◒	◒	●	◒	◒	◒	◒	◒	◒	○
ATTITUDES OF PROFESSIONALS RE COMMUNICATION	▲	▲	▲	▲	▲	▲	△	△	▲	△	△	△	△	△	△	△
ATTITUDES OF PARENTS RE. TITLE I PROJECT	■	■	⬓	⬓	■	⬓	⬓	⬓	■	⬓	⬓	■	⬓	⬓	⬓	■

✓ = Presence of this condition

LEGEND:

FUNDS

K = Thousands
M = Millions

ATTITUDES

●▲■ = Positive
◒▲⬓ = Neutral or Mixed
○△□ = Negative

Table 8-2. Contributory Factors

CHAPTER 9
POICY ISSUES FOR PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN TITLE I

I. INTRODUCTION

A critical dimension of early work on the Study of Parental Involvement was the identification of policy-relevant issues that would guide the study. As an outcome of a review of literature on parents in the educational process, interviews with persons concerned with parental involvement, and interactions with the study's Policy Advisory Group, five issues were specified that could bear on Federal, state, or local policies. These issues were described in Working Paper No. 1, Policy-Relevant Issues and Research Questions, October, 1979.

In this chapter we present our findings and conclusions regarding the five policy-relevant issues. Each issue is taken up separately. The format for

the presentations begins with a summary of the reasons behind the issue, continues with a description of our major findings for the issue, and ends with our conclusions.

The treatment of policy-relevant issues in this chapter, particularly the suggestions that are made, are based on two considerations. First, we presuppose the policy-makers at the Federal, state, and local levels expect positive results from implementing extensive parental involvement in Title I projects. That means that the suggestions are cast in a form intended to either initiate or extend parental participation in projects. Second, all conclusions are based on findings from our study. We have carefully avoided suggestions that appear sensible but had no bases in our observations at sites in study.

II. PARENTS IN THE GOVERNANCE ROLE

The major Congressional concern relative to parental involvement has been on parents actively participating in the governance of Federal educational programs through the medium of advisory groups. Congress' interest in a governance role for parents springs from the concept of particpatory democracy--that persons who are affected by Federal programs should have opportunities to participate in decisions about the program that may affect their lives. Over the years, as the Title I program has been successively reauthorized, Congress has been increasingly specific in mandating a role for parent advisory groups in project governance.

An analysis of the legislation for Title I demonstrates that Congress has intended for parents to have a meaningful role in project governance. That is, parents are to participate in making important decisions about, and are to share control over, the design, administration, and monitoring of projects.

There are a variety of viewpoints regarding parents and the governance role. On one hand, the argument has been made that current legislation, regulations, and customary practices are adequate to allow parents to have meaningful particpation in project governance. This position is taken by those who believe that broad mandates are sufficient, and that the right things will happen because of the good will of those involved. A contrary argument is that considerably more specificity and detail are needed in mandates if true participatory democracy is to be realized, because entrenched interest groups will not share power with others unless they are required to do so.

In this study, we approached the following policy-relevant issues:

- Do existing Federal and state legislation, regulations, and guidelines allow parents to participate in making important project decisions?

- Do existing state and local practices affect parental participation in the making of important project decisions?

MAJOR FINDINGS

When we explored parental participation in the governance of Title I projects, we had a primary focus on District and School Advisory Councils, but we also examined the influence of individual parents and of other groups or organizations. Our major findings were as follows:

1. Parents, as individuals, did not take part in Title I project governance.

2. Neither advisory groups for other educational programs, nor nonprogrammatic organizations, had any appreciable influence on Title I project governance.

3. Title I advisory councils infrequently played important parts in project governance. District Advisory Councils typically had either no role in project decision making or had a minor role, with only a few DACs having major roles. School Advisory Councils had even less involvement: very few SACs played a major part in making project decisions.

ANALYSES

Our analyses sought to explain the major findings, in terms of the questions that specified the policy-relevant issues. We were particularly interested in determining the effects of legislation, regulations, and current practices on parental participation in project governance.

We saw that, while existing legislation and regulations allowed parents to participate in making important project decisions, the imprecision of their language did not facilitate such involvement. Because of the way in which Federal legislation and regulations are written, it was possible for any actions of an advisory council to be interpreted as consistent with the mandate.

At the state level we saw that there were practices that influenced parental involvement in local projects. Many states have adopted their own guidelines for Title I and/or compensatory education, with provisions for parental involvement. When states actively implemented their own guidelines, including technical assistance and the monitoring of projects, then District Advisory Councils tended to play a larger part in project governance.

Similarly, there were local practices that had considerable impact. We found four practices that were particularly related to DAC participation in decision making. First, when a district or project specified an authority role for the DAC--identified a critical project area in which the DAC was to be involved with decisions--the DAC had greater involvement. Second, projects that had a Parent Coordinator who facilitated but did not dominate the DAC also had more active DACs. Third, the most-involved DACs had received training about Title I but particularly in group processes. Finally, the most-involved DACs occurred in districts without a narrowly-proscribed decision-making structure, districts that did not reserve all critical decisions to a few administrators.

III. PARENTS IN THE EDUCATIONAL ROLE

A second way in which parental involvement is manifested is through an educational role, with parents directly involved with the instructional process. Parents can participate in this educational role at a school as paid aides or volunteers or at home as tutors of their own children. Many parents are involved with the educational role; more participate in projects this way than through a governance role.

There are differences of opinion regarding the place of parents in the instructional process. Among the detractors two arguments are offered. The primary one is that instruction is the rightful province of trained professionals, and parents at best only interfere with (and at worst are actually detrimental to) improving student performance. A second argument offered by some detractors is that any home tutoring program is necessarily unfair because many students will not have parents who can provide them with effective instruction at home. Supporters of a place for parents in the instructional process suggest that parents are closer than professionals to student cultures and, therefore, are effective in meeting the needs of individual students. They also sometimes argue that, through their day-to-day interaction with school personnel, parent aides and volunteers influence schools to provide higher quality education for students. Finally, some supporters note that parent aides and volunteers are an inexpensive way to reduce the student/adult ratio so that the opportunities for individual assistance to students are enhanced.

The policy-relevant issues we addressed were:

- Do existing Federal and state legislation, regulations, and guidelines allow parents to participate meaningfully in the instructional process?

- Do existing state and local practices affect meaningful parental participation in instruction?

MAJOR FINDINGS

We studied three ways in which parents can participate in a Title I project's instructional processes: as paid aides, as instructional volunteers, and as home tutors. We found the following:

1. Seventy-five percent of Title I projects had parent aides. These parent aides were integral elements in instruction, but they did not participate extensively in instructional decision making.

2. Projects did not consider parent aides to be parental involvement.

3. There were no instructional volunteer programs.

4. Very few projects had systematic home tutoring programs, although many had informal home-assistance efforts.

ANALYSES

When we examined our findings with regard to the policy questions described earlier, we found that legislation and regulations concerning Title I did not address parents in the instructional process. While the Federal mandate made passing references to related matters (for instance, by indicating that aides were to be trained along with teachers), there were no provisions in the legislation or regulations spelling out a place for parents to advise in implementation of project instructional matters.

We found that most districts had policies that precluded a specific role for parents in instruction. First, extremely few districts gave preference to parents for Title I aide positions, although the mechanisms by which persons were recruited tended to favor the hiring of parents. Second, aides retained their positions year after year so that many persons who had once been parents of Title I children no longer were, although these individuals continued as Title I aides. Third, we saw that Parent Coordinators and School Advisory

Councils had no involvement with aides (reflecting the pervasive attitude that paid aide positions were not part of a project's parental involvement component). And fourth, parent aides were not included in structures by which projects made decisions about instruction (such as curriculum planning committees).

Our analysis suggested two reasons for the absence of instructional volunteers in Title I projects. One was that non-Title I volunteer programs existed and these caused projects to see no need for additional volunteers. The other was that parents were sometimes reluctant to volunteer for classroom assignments when other persons were being paid as aides to perform similar tasks.

With regard to the paucity of formal home tutoring programs in Title I projects, we found that few projects have ever given consideration to such a plan. When project personnel considered a role for parents in instruction, they rarely thought about systematic home tutoring.

IV. FUNDING CONSIDERATIONS AND PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Conventional logic holds that the types and amounts of services included in an operational project should be influenced by the level of funding received by that project. It is a simple extension of this argument to expect that parental involvement activities would be affected by funding levels. However, there has not been complete consensus on the possible interaction between funding level and project services. While some persons have held that more extensive parental involvement activities are found in projects with greater amounts of funds available to them, others believe that the extent to which parental involvement activities go on is less related to funding level than it is to attitudes and practices of educational personnel and parents.

A second funding consideration bears on the timing of fund allocations, and the duration of the funding. It is possible that late receipt of Title I funds, and a single-year funding cycle, can reduce the effective implementation of parental involvement activities. On the other hand, it can be argued that a well-developed parental involvement component in a project would not be unduly constrained by late funding or one-year funding.

One other funding consideration was suggested to us, i.e., the amount of a project's budget specifically devoted to parental involvement. This consideration involves the extent to which designated parental involvement funding relates to parental involvement activities.

In our study we collected information on the size of the Title I grant, the total amount of money provided to the district from all sources, the timing and duration of Title I grants, and the designation of money in the grant for parental involvement. With this information we attempted to address the following policy-relevant questions:

- Do total funding levels affect the quantity and quality of parental involvement activites?

- Do the timing and duration of grants influence parental involvement activities?

- Does the amount of funding specifically devoted to parental involvement affect parental involvement activities?

MAJOR FINDINGS

We found that total funding level--either in terms of the Title I grant or the overall amount of money available to the district--did not show any systematic relationship to parental involvement. We also found that the timing and duration of Title I grants did not appear to affect parental involvement. And we found it impossible to determine what monies were specifically designated for parental involvement activities.

ANALYSES

Neither the size of the Title I grant, nor the wealth of the district, bore any relationship to the proportion of parents who were active in a project, the range of a project's parental involvement activities, or the levels those activities took on. While we did see that districts with the largest Title I grants had more parents involved and more parental involvement activities than were found in districts with the lowest grant sizes, the differences were not great, and they were not consistent with the differences in grant size. In terms of quality--considering what went on within given parental involvement functions--grant size was not a contributing factor. The same held true for total district wealth.

Since Title I grants were received at about the same time and for the same lengths of time by all projects, it was not possible to detect any relationship between those variables and parental involvement. All Title I sites received their grants within a short time period, so we could not determine whether early receipt had any effect different from late receipt.

Districts included in the Site Study employed such widely different techniques for maintaining financial records that it was impossible to identify Title I funds used expressly for parental involvement. For example, some districts did consider parent aides as parental involvement, and included their salaries in a parental involvement line item of the project budget; other districts, also employing parents as aides, included these salaries under instructional expenses. As another example, some districts placed the salary of a Parent Coordinator under parental involvement, while others placed that expenditure under staff salaries. Despite extensive efforts, we were not able to obtain precise, accurate information on project expenditures for parental involvement at enough locations to allow for the formation of definitive findings.

V. PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT AND EDUCATIONAL QUALITY

The legislation for Title I does not offer a clear rationale for parental involvement. However, it is possible to deduce that the principal reason for parental involvement is the expectation that it will result in an improvement in the quality of education offered to students who are recipients of Title I services. Our literature review and interviews with informed persons suggested four ways in which parents can affect the quality of education:

1. Principally through advisory councils, but also through less formal interactions with project personnel, parents can influence the design, administration, and evaluation of project services offered to students.

2. What is taught (curriculum) and how (instruction) in a Title I project can be affected by advisory councils, parent aides and volunteers, and individual parents.

3. Parents can provide, to a Title I project, overt support (such as volunteering to accompany students on a field trip) and covert support (such as instilling positive attitudes in their children toward education).

4. By the manner in which they interact with project personnel and perhaps with each other, parents can infuence the climate of a project school.

Some of the arguments concerning parental involvement cited in regard to other policy issues indicate that there is not perfect agreement on parental involvement and educational quality. Some persons hold that all important educational matters should be left to the professionals without interference from laypersons. (This view is not unique to professionals. There are parents who share it; proportionately, however, there are more educators than parents who hold this view.) Contrarily, people who believe in the

participatory democracy notion feel that parent participation in Title I projects should enhance the quality of project services.

The policy-relevant issue we addressed was:

- Do parental involvement activities influence the quality of educational services provided to Title I students?

MAJOR FINDING

Considering all parental involvement functions, at all study sites, we found that parents did not materially influence the quality of education as this was previously defined.

ANALYSES

We pointed out earlier that parents, as part of advisory councils or as individuals, did not participate widely in the decision-making process about Title I projects. As a result, parents had little impact on the design, administration, or evaluation of project services.

We also indicated earlier that parent aides and instructional volunteers did not participate in decisions that were made about instruction. Therefore, parents did not affect the project's curriculum or instructional methods.

While we did find instances in which parents offered support to Title I projects, they were not extensive and were seldom an integral part of projects. We did not observe systematic project efforts to augment project services by the inclusion of parents.

There was extensive interaction between Title I projects and parents, but we saw that parents had little influence on school climate through these interactions. Largely this was because the major mode of interacting was that

of one-way communcation from the project to parents. The absence of regular, face-to-face interaction between parents and project personnel meant that parents did not have opportunities to affect school climate.

VI. MULTIPLE FUNDING AND PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Most school districts are participating in more than one program that calls for parental involvement. There are numerous Federal educational programs and some state programs that include parental involvement components. It is of some concern to Title I personnel that the relationship among different projects, being implemented side-by-side, be examined with regard to parental involvement.

It is possible that the occurrence of parallel projects has a salubrious effect and that the natural interaction among parents involved with different projects results in each stimulating and learning from the other. Alternatively, it is possible that the requirements for different advisory groups, along with the different concerns of parents, siphon time from parent leaders and project administrators, as well as create conflicts among both parents and educators.

In this study, we addressed the following policy-relevant issue:

- When multiple programs are funded at a site, are the quantity and quality of parental involvement activities affected?

MAJOR FINDINGS

We learned that parental involvement components of Title I projects were relatively unaffected by other projects. We saw no effect at the district level and only a minor effect at the school level. On the other hand, we found that Title I projects sometimes influenced the parental involvement of other projects. We saw little interaction or coordination of parental involvement activities across projects.

ANALYSES

In Title I projects, parental involvement at the district level is confined to governance. Title I District Advisory Councils took care of whatever parental participation there was in project decisions. We did not uncover any instances of decisions about Title I projects being made by advisory groups for other projects. At participating schools we did note that advisory groups for state compensatory programs occasionally participated in Title I decisions. Sometimes these advisory groups were different from Title I School Advisory Councils; but typically a single group was formed to satisfy the requirements of both the state and Title I mandates.

Examining the other side of the coin, we found scattered instances of Title I parental involvement activities encroaching on other projects. There were cases where a Title I DAC would review the grant applications for other Federal or state programs. Further, at some schools Title I parent aides worked in classrooms that were designated for other programs (particularly Title VII Bilingual). To repeat, these cases of Title I parental involvement activities affecting another project were quite rare.

When we considered the articulation of parental involvement activities across projects, we found that Title I DACs had minimal contact with the district advisory groups for other projects. We found some examples of overlapping memberships, with the same parents serving on more than one advisory group, but this overlap did not result in the different governing bodies sharing information or coordinating their activities. And while there were Title I Parent Coordinators who served other projects as well as Title I, this was typically for parent education programs or for school-home communication purposes.

VII. A FINAL VIEW OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

The comments made in this chapter about policy issues have been based on the belief that well-conceived and implemented parental involvement activities are beneficial to Title I projects. We recognize that conclusions about actions that might be taken by policy makers need to be backed up with evidence that the participation of parents has real payoffs.

Overall, it is apparent that parental involvement was not extensive in Title I projects. Beyond this observation, it is also evident that there were wide variations among projects, with different degrees of involvement of parents in project affairs. Thus, there were projects where it was not possible to find any parental participation at all, projects where parents took an active part in every type of activity possible, and projects at all stages in between. That becomes one of the major generalizations of our work: parental involvement in highly variable, from one project to another.

Within this observed variability, there were examples of Title I projects in which we saw a great deal of parental activity. Associated with projects having higher levels of activities we found many positive outcomes, and few negative outcomes. At those locations where we found the highest levels of involvement, numerous respondents--parents, paraprofessionals, and professionals--reported that parental involvement activities resulted in benefits to parents, to projects and schools, to staff members, and to students. These same respondents seldom suggested that there were many prices to pay, nor that those prices were very high. All of this leads to a second generalization: high levels of parental involvement produce valuable outcomes.

Throughout our discussions of parental involvement functions in Title I projects, we have identified a number of important factors that contributed to the presence of activities, and to the intensity of participation associated with those activities. Some factors were specific to a particular type of

activity, but there were many factors whose impacts were noted whatever the form of the activity. These far-reaching factors were addressed succesfully by projects that had attained the highest levels of parental involvement, bringing us to a third generalization: while there are obstacles to achieving extensive, high quality parental involvement, those obstacles can be overcome.

When we began the Study of Parental Involvement, we assumed that the participation of parents in Title I projects could occur, and would have beneficial effects. What we found, as we carried out a detailed examination of 16 projects, verified our assumptions. We discovered some cases of active projects with valuable outcomes from parental activities. There were enough instances like that for us to conclude that it <u>is</u> possible to realize the successes that have been hypothesized by the proponents of parental involvement.

APPENDIX
TECHNICAL DETAILS OF THE STUDY

The Study of Parental Involvement in Four Federal Education Programs has been designed to provide a systematic exploration of parental participation in the educational process. The Study has consisted of two substudies--the Federal Programs Survey and the Site Study. A previous volume reported in detail the findings from the Federal Programs Survey. The present volume is devoted to the Site Study findings. However, in order for the reader to fully understand these findings, we feel it is necessary to present an overview of the purposes and methods employed in both substudies.

Accordingly, this Appendix contains three parts. Part I is an introduction to parental involvement in Federal programs and a delineation of the design and purposes of the overall Study. Part II discusses briefly the Federal Programs Survey and, in particular, its relationship to the Site Study. Finally, Part III affords the reader a closer look at the instrumentation, data collection, and analysis procedures associated with the Site Study, thereby providing a substantial background for the findings presented in this volume.

I. OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

THE ROOTS OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN FEDERAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS

During the past decade parental participation has come to play an increasingly important role in the educational process. The concept of parental involvement in Federal education programs has its roots in the Community Action Program of the Economic Opportunities Act of 1964 (EOA), administered by the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO). One intent of the EOA was to promote community action to increase the political participation of previously excluded citizens, particularly members of ethnic minority groups, and to provide them with a role in the formation of policies and the making of decisions that had the potential to affect their lives (Peterson and Greenstone, 1977). More specifically, the EOA required that poverty programs be developed with the "maximum feasible participation of the residents of areas and the members of the groups served."

As applied to education, the maximum feasible participation requirement has been interpreted quite broadly. One manifestation has been the requirement that parents of children being served become members of policy-making groups. EOA's Head Start Program was the first Federal education program to address the concern of maximum feasible participation by instituting such groups. In addition to decision-making (governance) roles, Head Start also provided opportunities for parents of served children to become involved as paid staff members in Head Start centers and as teachers of their own children at home. Other Federal education programs have tended to follow the lead of Head Start in identifying both governance and direct service roles for parents in the educational process. In fact, participation by parents in Federal education programs has been stipulated in the General Education Provisions Act (Section 427), which calls for the Commissioner of Education to establish regulations encouraging parental participation in any program for which it is determined that such participation would increase the effectiveness of the program.

The Study of Parental Involvement has been designed to examine parental involvement components of four Federal education programs: ESEA Title I, ESEA Title VII Bilingual, Emergency School Aid Act (ESAA), and Follow Through. While there are differences in the legislation, regulations, and guidelines pertaining to each of the four programs, all of them derive their emphasis upon parental/community participation from the General Education Provisions Act. Because these programs differ in terms of intent, target populations, and mandated parental involvement, they provide a rich source of information on the subject of the study.

RESEARCH INTO PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

The present study takes on added significance in light of the paucity of prior research directed to the nature and consequences of parental involvement. Despite the increasing opportunities provided to parents and other community members to influence the educational process, little systematic information has been available on the role parents actually play in designing and/or delivering educational services associated with Federal programs. While prior evaluations of each of the four subject programs have included some attention to parental involvement, none has addressed this aspect of the program in a focused, in-depth fashion. For example, studies conducted by the American Institute for Research for Title VII Bilingual (1978), System Development Corporation for ESAA (1976, 1978), Nero Associates for Follow Through (1976), and System Development Corporation for Title I (1970) all reported some limited information touching on parental involvement within the subject program.

The exception to this pattern treating parental involvement as a subsidiary concern was a series of NIE-sponsored studies whose primary focus was Title I district- and school-level advisory groups. The results of four of these studies were presented in an NIE (1978) report to Congress, while the fifth was conducted by CPI Associates during the spring of 1978. But even this series of studies had definite limitations in scope. They were essentially exploratory in nature; the types of parental involvement examined were limited

to district and school Parent Advisory Councils; the participation of parents as aides and volunteers, the tutoring that parents provide their own children at home, and parent-school liaison personnel were not included in the examinations. Finally, little can be determined about the factors that influence Title I PACs or the consequences of PAC functions from these studies. These are two vital areas, as will be seen, in the present Study. Thus, for each of the four subject programs in the Study of Parental Involvement, the research can be said to have produced scattered findings that are more provocative than definitive.

Going beyond evaluations of the four subject Federal programs, there are numerous studies that have been concerned with aspects of parental involvement specifically or have included considerations of parental involvement. Three recent reviews are available that summarize findings from different studies (Chong, 1976; Center for Equal Education, 1977; Gordon, 1978). These reviews provided considerable information to help shape the Study of Parental Involvement (e.g., insight into what types of parental involvement appear to make a difference in the educational process); but in and of themselves the studies reported therein were much too narrowly focused to be generalized to the four Federal programs.

PURPOSES FOR THE STUDY OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

As the above review indicates, previous studies do not provide systematic, nationally representative information on parental involvement in Federal education programs. To fill this gap in knowledge, the U.S. Department of Education (ED) issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) for a study which would achieve two broad goals:

1. To obtain an accurate description of the form and extent of parental involvement in Federal education programs and, for each identified form or participatory role, to identify factors which seem to facilitate or prevent parents from carrying out these roles.

2. To study the feasibility of disseminating information about effective parental involvement.

In response to this RFP, System Development Corporation (SDC) proposed a study which included these major objectives:

1. DESCRIBE PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

The first objective is to provide detailed descriptions of parental involvement in terms of three categories of information:

a. Types and levels of parental involvement activities and the extent to which each activity occurs

b. Characteristics of participants and non-participants in parental involvement activities, including both parents and educators

c. Costs associated with parental involvement activities

2. IDENTIFY CONTRIBUTORY FACTORS

The second objective is to identify factors that facilitate the conduct of parental involvement activities and factors that inhibit such activities and to ascertain the relative contributions of these factors to specific activities and to parental involvement in general.

3. DETERMINE CONSEQUENCES

The third study objective is to determine the direction and degree of the outcomes of parental involvement activities. Included in this task are outcomes of specific activities as well as outcomes of parental involvement in general.

4. SPECIFY SUCCESSFUL STRATEGIES

Based on findings concerning parental involvement activities, their contributory factors, and their outcomes, strategies which have been successful in enhancing parental involvement at one or more sites will be specified.

5. PROMULGATE FINDINGS

The fifth objective is to produce reports and handbooks on parental involvement for project implementors, program administrators, and Congress.

The objectives cited above were translated into a set of research questions intended to guide the Study of Parental Involvement. Answers to these questions ought to provide a firm foundation for decision making at the Congressional, program office, and local levels. The six global research questions identified were:

- What is the nature of parental involvement?
- Who does and who does not participate in parental involvement?
- What monetary costs are associated with parental involvement?
- What factors influence parental involvement activities?
- What are the consequences of parental involvement?
- Are there identifiable strategies which have been successful in promoting and/or carrying out parental involvement activities?

DESIGN OF THE OVERALL STUDY

The design of any study the size of the Study of Parental Involvement is a complex and painstaking task. We will only briefly summarize the design tasks undertaken to achieve the purposes of the Study, since they were presented in the last section. First, during the planning phase of the study, a conceptual framework for parental involvement was established, and a set of policy issues was specified. Then, two substudies were designed and implemented. First, the Federal Programs Survey was developed to collect "quantitative" descriptive data on formal parental involvement activities from a sample of districts and schools representative of each of the programs on a nationwide basis. Second, the Site Study was created to explore in a more qualitative, in-depth fashion the contributory factors and consequences of parental involvement, as well as the more informal and site-specific parental involvement activities. (The Site Study findings are, to reiterate, the subject of this volume.)

The remainder of Part I of this Appendix will discuss the primary features of the conceptual framework established for the Study of Parental Involvement, while Parts II and III will be devoted to the Federal Programs Survey and Site Study respectively.

CONCEPTUALIZATION OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

During the planning phase of the Study, a conceptualization of parental involvement was developed; in conjunction with the conceptualization, a series of policy issues were specified. Both of these tasks were conducted on the basis of information which included extensive reviews of the literature on parental involvement, examinations of legislation and regulations for the four Federal programs, suggestions from study advisory group members, the personal experiences of project staff members, and interviews with representatives of each of the three major audiences for the study. (The latter encompasses Congress, Federal program administrators, and local implementors of parental involvement.) Although the two tasks were interrelated, we will discuss each separately for the sake of clarity.

In order to realize the objectives of the study, a conceptualization of parental involvement was developed. It can be summarized by the statement:

> Given that certain preconditions are satisfied, parental involvement functions are implemented in varying ways, depending upon particular contextual factors, and produce certain outcomes.

Five major elements are embedded in this statement. These elements, which comprise the conceptualization that guides the study, are outlined briefly below.

Functions

Five parental involvement functions were identified. The functions are:

- Parental participation in project governance
- Parental participation in the instructional process
- Parental involvement in non-instructional support services for the school
- Communication and interpersonal relations among parents and educators
- Educational offerings for parents

Preconditions

These are the conditions that must be satisfied in order for parental involvement activities to take place. They are necessary for the implementation of a function, in that a function cannot exist if any of the preconditions is not met. For instance, one precondition is that there be some parents willing to engage in the function.

Context

Parental involvement activities take place within an environment that contributes to the manner and degree of their operationalization and potentially to their effectiveness. Systematic examinations of these contextual factors may allow for a determination of which of these contribute to parental involvement, in what ways, and to what degrees. As an example, one contextual factor of potential importance is a community's history of citizen involvement with social programs.

Implementation

When a particular parental involvement function is carried out, there are a number of variables that help to portray the process of implementation. Through these variables, activities can be described in terms of participants, levels of participation, and costs. One variable that exemplifies implementation is the decision-making role of the advisory council.

Outcomes

Parental involvement activities can lead to both positive and negative consequences for both institutions and individuals. Examinations of these outcomes will provide the information needed for decisions about what constitutes effective parental involvement practices.

SPECIFICATION OF POLICY-RELEVANT ISSUES

Policy-relevant issues were specified in five areas. Providing information on these issues should be of special value to decision makers who can influence legislation, program operations, and project implementation.

Parental Involvement in Governance

This area covers parental participation in the planning of projects, in ongoing decision making about projects, and in evaluating projects. The policy issues within the governance realm are:

- Do existing Federal and state legislation, regulations, and guidelines allow parents to participate in making important decisions?

- Do existing state and local practices affect parental participation in the making of important decisions?

Parental Involvement in the Instructional Process

The second area is concerned with parental participation in instruction as paid or volunteer paraprofessionals within the school or as tutors of their own children at home. The specific issues related to the instructional process are:

- Do existing Federal and state legislation, regulations, and guidelines allow parents to participate meaningfully in educational roles?

- Do existing state and local practices affect meaningful parental participation in educational roles?

Funding Considerations and Parental Involvement

Policy issues within the third area explore the relationship between funding considerations and the conduct of parental involvement activities. These issues are:

- Do total funding levels affect the quantity and quality of parental involvement activities?

- Do the timing and duration of fund allocations influence the quantity and quality of parental involvement activities?

- Does the amount of funding specifically devoted to parental involvement affect the quantity and quality of parental involvement activities?

Parental Involvement and Educational Quality

The fourth area of concern is the quality of education offered to students who are recipients of program services. The policy issue is:

- Do parental involvement activities influence the quality of education provided to students served by the four Federal programs?

Multiple Funding and Parental Involvement

The final area addresses the situation in which a district or a school is participating in more than one program that calls for parental involvement. The issue of relevance in such a situation is:

- When multiple programs are funded at a site, are the quantity and quality of parental involvement activities affected?

II. THE FEDERAL PROGRAMS SURVEY

Two broad purposes guided the development of the Federal Programs Survey (FPS). First, it was intended to provide nationwide projections of the nature and extent of parental involvement activities in districts and schools that have projects funded by one or more of the subject programs. Second, the FPS was to provide the information needed to establish a meaningful sampling design for the Site Study. This section will merely touch on some of the features of FPS sampling, instrumentation, and data collection. The reader interested in details about FPS methodology and/or findings is encouraged to review the FPS report entitled Parents and Federal Education Programs: Some Preliminary Findings from the Study of Parental Involvement.

Four independent samples of districts (and schools within those districts) were drawn (using a two-stage process detailed in the FPS report) to achieve a national representation of participating schools within each of the four target programs. Separate district-level and school-level questionnaires were constructed for ESAA, Title I, and Title VII. In light of Follow Through's organizational structure, project-level and school-level questionnaires were developed.

With two exceptions (discussed below), questionnaires for all four programs addressed the same broad content areas. At the district (or project) level, those were:

1. Background information
2. Supervision/coordination of parental involvement activities
3. District level advisory councils

At the school level, they were:

1. Background information
2. Paid paraprofessionals
3. Volunteers

4. Parents as teachers for their own children
5. Coordination/promotion of parental involvement activities
6. School funding

The Title I school-level questionnaire also contained a separate section on school-level advisory councils to reflect the Title I mandate for such school-level councils. The ESAA district-level and school-level questionnaire each included a section addressing ESAA-funded non-profit organizations.

The Federal Programs Survey was conducted during April and May of 1979. A mail and telephone data collection procedure was employed to ensure quality data and a high response rate. Copies of the appropriate forms were sent to the liaison person in each district, who most often was the director of the subject Federal program. This person was requested to fill out the district-level questionnaire and to assign the school-level questionnaires to the program staff member(s) best acquainted with project operations at the selected schools. A trained SDC representative called (at a time convenient for the respondent) to record responses to the questionnaires.

Once the data were recorded, each questionnaire was thoroughly reviewed by a SDC staff member in order to identify any inconsistencies or omissions. Follow-up calls were made to remedy these deficiencies.

The mail and telephone method provided respondents with time to gather the information needed to complete the questionnaire before the telephone interviews. It also allowed SDC staff members to assist respondents with questions they found ambiguous or unclear. Because of the review and call-back process, instances of missing data or logically inconsistent information were rare. Finally, the procedure generally insures a very high response rate. In particular, response rates of 96 percent were obtained at both the district-level (286 out of 299 sampled districts) and the school-level (869 out of 908 sampled schools). For all of these reasons, we are confident that the quality of data collected in the FPS was extremely high.

III. THE SITE STUDY

PURPOSES

The Site Study was conceptualized as an in-depth investigation of parental involvement which would provide information extending far beyond the descriptions of formal program components derived from the Federal Programs Survey. More specifically, four types of information were to be obtained:

1. Detailed descriptions of parental involvement functions, including governance and education functions in all cases and other functions wherever they occur.

2. Informal aspects of parental involvement; that is, ways in which parents participate in addition to formal project components.

3. Factors which enhance or deter the participation of parents in Federal education programs and/or influence the extent of their impact on program operations or outcomes.

4. Consequences of parental participation, both for the participants themselves and for the programs and institutions within which they operate.

OVERVIEW OF THE SITE STUDY

To satisfy the above purposes, intensive, on-site data collection efforts, employing a variety of data sources and a substantial period of time, were demanded. To meet these demands, experienced researchers who lived in the immediate vicinity of each sampled site were employed and trained by SDC. They remained on-site for a period of 16 weeks, on a half-time basis, collecting information from the LEA and two participating schools. Three data collection techniques were used by the Field Researchers: interviews, observations, and document analyses. Their data collection efforts were

guided by a set of "analysis packets" which contained detailed descriptions of the research questions to be explored and the appropriate techniques to employ. Information gathered on site was submitted to SDC on a regular basis, in the form of taped protocols and written forms on which specific data were recorded. Each Field Researcher worked with a senior SDC staff member who served as a Site Coordinator, providing guidance and direction as necessary. Toward the end of the data collection period, all Field Researchers were asked to do a series of summary protocols which called for them to analyze their data, with the assistance of the Site Coordinators, for the purposes of answering major questions of substantive interest. These summary protocols became critical elements in the multi-step analysis procedures carried out by staff at SDC.

METHODOLOGY

Within this section, various aspects of the Site Study methodology are discussed: sampling, hiring and training of Field Researchers, data collection techniques, instrumentation, data reporting, and analyses.

SAMPLE DESIGN

As was the case for the FPS, samples for the Site Study were drawn independently for the four Federal programs. Within each program, the goal was to select districts and schools that exhibited greater and lesser degrees of parental involvement--defined as involvement in governance and education functions, as determined by the FPS. In addition to degree of parental involvement, the sample took into account the urbanicity of districts and the number of programs from which the district was receiving funds. Each sample was drawn using a two-step process. First, districts were selected for participation. Then, two elementary schools within each district were selected. (Four districts were exceptions to this procedure since, for each, there was only one elementary school participating in the project. For these districts, then, the site consisted of the district (or project) office and the single participating elementary school.) The Site Study was intended to investigate

approximately 50 districts and 100 schools. To account for projected losses of districts--due to problems with data collection--a 25 percent oversample was used. Thus, 62 districts were chosen for the initial sample: 15 each in the ESAA and Title VII Bilingual programs and 16 each in Title I and Follow Through. Due to problems in securing final district approval and/or locating Field Researchers that met all our criteria, the final sample included 57 sites.

Given the fact that the sample for the Site Study was purposefully designed to yield a number of relatively active and relatively inactive sites, one must avoid generalizing percentages or averages from this small sample to the entire population of districts and schools receiving services from a particular Federal program.

HIRING OF FIELD RESEARCHERS

An intensive recruitment and hiring effort was conducted to ensure that qualified Field Researchers would be located at each site. A description of the Field Researcher's duties and qualifications was prepared and sent to appropriate individuals at organizations such as research firms, colleges, universities, community groups and school districts located near selected sites. Approximately 700 job descriptions were sent, and we received approximately 200 resumes from prospective candidates. SDC staff members then visited sites and conducted personal interviews with all candidates whose resumes passed an initial screening process. For those sites at which an insufficient number of viable candidates was located prior to the staff member's visit, an attempt was made to locate and interview additional candidates during the course of the trip. In a few instances, interviews with additional candidates were conducted from SDC via telephone. And, for two sites in remote locations for which personal visits were unfeasible, the entire selection process was conducted via written and telephonic communication.

Qualifications for the Field Researcher position included a background in the social sciences, research experience, some experience working with school districts and, in some instances, fluency in a second language. In addition, for several sites, school district personnel required that Field Researchers be of particular racial or ethnic backgrounds. Despite our intensive recruitment effort, this combination of criteria resulted in our being unable to find satisfactory candidates in two sites. These sites were therefore dropped from the sample.

INSTRUMENTATION

In designing the Site Study instrumentation, one of our major goals was that the information to be gathered provide accurate, detailed descriptions of the full range of program-related activities at each site--no matter how unusual those activities might be. While providing for the investigation of site-specific program chracteristics, we wanted to ensure that a core of data about common program activities be gathered in a comparable way across sites. Further, we wanted to make sure that the Site Study would explore, in depth, both the relationships between parental involvement activities and relationships between these activities, various contextual factors, and valued outcomes. In addition to these substantive considerations, we attempted to minimize to the extent possible the burden that this intensive data collection effort would place on respondents at each site.

We realized that to achieve these goals, we did <u>not</u> want Field Researchers to go out into district offices and schools armed with a set of formal interview questionnaires and observation protocols. Such a tightly-structured approach requires that the researcher make numerous assumptions about what parental involvement activities are going on in the field and which of these activities are most important. Further, the researcher must presume to be able to word questions in a manner that will take into account regional, educational, and socio-economic differences. Given our goals and our unwillingness to make such assumptions, we have developed a unique approach to instrumentation. Basically, the approach entails the use of four sets of "analysis packets"

(one tailored to each of the four target programs) to guide Field Researchers in their data collection efforts. These analysis packets, each of which addresses a particular research issue of concern to the Study, employ three data collection techniques--interviews, observations, and document analyses. These data collection techniques and the analysis packet approach are described in detail below.

Data Collection Techniques

The primary data collection method employed during the study was interviews with key individuals in the district, school, and community. Field Researchers interviewed Federal program directors, coordinators of parental involvement, district and school administrators, teachers, program advisory group officers and members, parents participating in program-supported activities, parents not participating in program-supported activities, and, in some cases, officers of non-program advisory committees such as the PTA.

Observation techniques represented the second data collection strategy. The major purpose of the observations was to gather first-hand information on the parental involvement activities that took place at each site. Because of the extended site visitation schedule, Field Researchers were able to observe advisory group meetings, parents involved within classrooms, training sessions for parents, social interactions among staff and parents and, to some extent, informal interchanges involving educators and parents.

Finally, Field Researchers analyzed available documentation associated with parental involvement. At many sites, such documentation included advisory council bylaws, minutes of meetings, newsletters or bulletins, handbooks, and flyers announcing activities for parents.

Analysis Packets

As already noted, the multi-site, multi-method data collection effort was organized and structured by means of a set of analysis packets. Each packet

addressed a particular research area of concern in the Study (for example, the governance function). Research areas were divided into several dimensions, and the packet was organized by these dimensions. For example, dimensions within the governance analysis packet included District-level Advisory Committees, other advisory groups/organizations, and individuals. Several dimensions were then further subdivided into sections which focused on important topics for investigation within dimensions. Thus, within the District-level Advisory Committee dimension, sections addressed such topics as parent member characteristics, meeting logistics, and involvement in decision making. Each of these sections was introduced by an essay that explained the importance of the subject under investigation to the overall Study and described the kinds of information to be collected. We wanted the Field Researchers' data collection efforts to be based on an understanding of the relationship between various pieces of information and on a sense of how the information would add to the overall picture of parental involvement.

Three fundamental approaches to investigating topics presented within analysis packet sections were developed. They were termed constant, orienting, and exploratory. They are briefly described below.

Constant - In those limited instances where it was possible to do so, we designed research questions that were to be asked in a precise, standardized form, using the specific language in which they were written.

Orienting - For these sections, we felt that it was not possible to specify in advance the actual questions to be asked, since the nature of the questions would depend upon the particular characteristics of each site. Within the essay lead-in Field Researchers were provided with an orientation toward the subject for investigation and guidance for initiating a line of inquiry.

Exploratory - There were some aspects of parental involvement, such as home tutoring and parent education programs, about which so little was known that we were unable to determine in advance the degree to which they merited study. To avoid prescribing any unnecessary data collection, we chose to first examine these potential avenues of parental participation at a very general level, using questions which were purely "exploratory" in nature.

Within each analysis packet section, we specified interview respondents, observation situations, and documents on the basis of the nature of information sought.

DATA REPORTING

Given the ambitious purposes of the Site Study and the consequent breadth of the analysis packets, Field Researchers collected a wealth of information about program-related parental involvement activities. The recording and transmission of this information back to SDC were crucial to the success of the Study. Consequently, we developed a multifaceted data recording system, intended to treat each of the several types of data in as accurate, complete, and efficient a manner as possible.

For constant sections, we provided Field Researchers with forms on which to record answers to interview questions and information from observation periods. Field Researchers were requested to transcribe any notes made in the field onto these forms as soon as possible after returning from a period of interviewing or observing. Information garnered from analysis of documents could conceivably be used to complement constant interview data. Field Researchers were instructed to record such information on the same form as interview information and identify it as to its source. As each constant section was completed, Field Researchers sent a copy to their supervisors at SDC while retaining the originals in their site notebooks.

The process for orienting sections (which constituted the bulk of the analysis packets) was considerably different. Whether generated through interview or observation, orienting information was to be recorded on an audio tape; Field Researchers were trained to recapture, in as much detail as possible, everything that transpired during the interview or observation period. For interview situations, this meant that the Field Researcher would detail the sequence of questions and replies. For observation situations, it meant that given a defined focus, the Field Researchers would recapture events in the sequence they unfolded. These tapes were called "sequential protocols." When an interview or observation could not be recorded in a sequential manner, Field Researchers were asked to recall the key points of what had transpired and prepare a tape to be transcribed into a recollective protocol. The recording and reporting of data for exploratory sections paralleled those for orienting sections.

Document analyses, conducted as part of an orienting or exploratory section, did not require any taping on the part of a Field Researcher. Instead, the Field Researcher sent a copy either of the notes taken or the document itself (with appropriate highlighting and marginal comments) back to SDC.

The data reporting procedures described above all revolved around what were termed Site Coordinators. These were SDC staff people who had responsibility for coordinating the efforts of the Field Researchers. Site Coordinators were in charge of from four to eight sites. They contacted each Field Researcher by phone at least weekly. Each Field Researcher sent constant answer sheets and taped protocols to the Site Coordinator, who was expected to expedite transcription, mail back copies of materials to the Field Researcher, and review carefully the substance of the data. As a result, the Site Coordinator could verify that tasks were being completed satisfactorily. More importantly, Site Coordinators were expected to assist Field Researchers with the resolution of problems occurring on site and to participate in crucial decision making regarding appropriate areas for future investigation. Ultimately, the Site Coordinators became the central figures in actual analyses of the data.

ANALYSIS PROCEDURES

The following section discusses our analysis procedures for data collected during the course of the Site Study. Given the large amount of information available from each of the sites, it became especially important to establish a carefully conceived, systematic analysis plan which would achieve our primary goal of being able to identify patterns of parental involvement across sites. Throughout the Site Study, achieving cross-site comparability was foremost in our minds; this was reflected in the relatively high degree of structure we injected into our instrumentation (already discussed). And it was further reflected in the design of an analysis plan that called for a high degree of abstraction from the raw data. Analyses were done at two levels. The Field Researchers themselves conducted the first level of analysis, with guidance from the Site Coordinators. They collated the data from their interviews, observations and document analyses related to specific issues defined in the analysis packets and prepared a summary protocol for each issue. These summary protocols formed a comprehensive picture of the nature, causes and consequences of parental involvement at each site.

The second level of analysis was done by the Site Coordinator at SDC to discover patterns in the data across sites in each program. This was accomplished in two steps: first, Site Coordinators summarized the major findings from each site into syntheses that followed a common outline; second, these syntheses were further distilled into "analysis tables" that arranged the findings from all sites into large matrices that could be examined to discover cross-site patterns. Versions of these analysis tables accompany the presentations of data in this volume. The data collection methodologies we employed provided us with a great wealth of data to draw upon in preparing our reports, while the analysis strategies we adopted enabled us to discern patterns in this data and to discover major findings related to parental involvement.

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